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Migration to new destinations: Local migrant experiences in a globalised world

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Migration to New Destinations

Local migrant experiences in a globalised world

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines modern migration processes to new destinations. Using case studies in Northern Ireland, it analyses the challenges and complexities of integration as a way of framing migrants' settlement in new societies. Despite the scale and pace of global migration patterns and an expanding research literature, current theoretical approaches and conceptual ideas do not adequately capture the problematic, complex and multifaceted nature of contemporary migration. This study advances and deepens our understanding of migration to new destinations by developing and applying a theoretical framework based on structuration theory. Employing qualitative and quantitative methods the research examines the interplay between migrants' experiences (agency) and the functioning of state and civil society (structures) in facilitating integration processes. Specific themes including employment and housing are used to investigate integration mechanisms. The study evaluates efforts by state bodies and civil society organisations to accommodate migrants, including an examination of local community perspectives. The empirical research shows how integration is a concept with no shared meaning. This is evidenced through state and civil society responses that place limits on migrants to apply their capabilities and fulfil their aspirations. Social reality does not match policy rhetoric of integration as a mutual two-way process between migrants and society. New destinations emphasise the significance of context for migration processes. In Northern Ireland there are additional challenges for integration against the socio-political backdrop of segregation and sectarianism. The conceptual framework developed in this study examines complex structure-agency dynamics that in many ways challenge the theory and practice of integration.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A8	Accession 8 Countries
A2	Accession 2 Countries
BRIC	Building Relationships in Communities
CSA	Case Study A
CSB	Case Study B
EEC	European Economic Community
EU	European Union
IGO	Inter-Governmental Organisation
LGD	Local Government District
MLA	Member of the Local Assembly
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NI	Northern Ireland
NIA	Northern Ireland Assembly
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NILT	Northern Ireland Life and Times
OFMDFM	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
QUANGO	Quasi-Autonomous Non-Governmental Organisation
QUB	Queen's University Belfast
RDC	(Northern Ireland) Rural Development Council
RPA	Review of Public Administration
TARRN	Trans-Atlantic Rural Research Network
UK	United Kingdom
UKBA	United Kingdom Border Agency
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This thesis examines recent migration to Northern Ireland. Since the early 2000s Northern Ireland has experienced an unprecedented rise in migrants from central and eastern European countries. As a result of European Union (EU) enlargement in 2004, the Accession 8 (A8) countries joined the EU: the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. The EU expanded again in 2007 with the addition of the Accession 2 (A2) countries of Bulgaria and Romania. Latest figures suggest that 35,503 A8 and A2 migrants reside in Northern Ireland (Census, 2011). It is these two categories on which this research is based. Northern Ireland can be described as a 'new destination' as it has not previously been the recipient of much immigration. Migration is known to present significant challenges for migrants and society alike, with this research examining both migrants' experiences and the responses of the state and civil society. This chapter outlines the background and rationale of the research. It sets out the aim and objectives of the study and details the chapter structure of the thesis.

1.2 Research Background and Rationale

Why people migrate and how they are received in new destinations are fundamental questions for migration researchers (Massey et al., 1998; Castles and Miller, 2003; Samers, 2010). There is an abundant and growing research literature on migration patterns and processes that raises questions on why we continue to study it; what do new studies contribute; and how future studies should proceed. But migration is a subject that not only concerns academic researchers. It is of interest to government and policy makers, service deliverers, local communities and society more generally. Unquestionably the scale and pace of contemporary migration movements are transforming societies (Samers, 2010). While migration is viewed as essential to the functioning of a neoliberal globalising world, it presents both challenges and opportunities for nation states and for migrating individuals who seek to better their life prospects in unfamiliar countries. Migration is thus framed as problematic, is frequently central to headline debates and attracts extensive policy debate and disputes on how to best manage it (Penninx, 2005; Penninx et al., 2008). Despite the proliferation of international movement, migration is projected negatively as a problem

that needs to be carefully contained and controlled (Kivisto and Faist, 2010; Samers, 2010). The empirical question in this research seeks to understand how migrants manage new circumstances, and in turn, how society functions to accommodate migrant communities with particular attention to new destinations.

The migration research field is wide and varied with multidisciplinary perspectives (Brettell and Hollifield, 2000), competing theoretical ideas (Kivisto and Faist, 2010) and various empirical approaches (Castles, 2012; Vargas-Silva, 2012). It is currently described as being at a critical juncture both theoretically and empirically in attempting to explain increasingly complex social phenomena (Bakewell, 2010; Iosifides, 2011a; O'Reilly, 2012). Despite being an extensive domain of research, new global migration patterns and processes are not sufficiently explained using traditional approaches and perspectives. The inadequacies and gaps presented by earlier traditions tend to attribute migration to either macro structural forces or the micro actions of individuals, with little analysis within and between the two (Morawska, 2001; Bakewell, 2010). There are additional complexities posed by modern migration with new geographies to non-traditional areas (Lichter and Johnson, 2009; Massey, 2010; Marrow, 2011, 2013), new forms of mobility and the ability to live transnationally (Portes et al., 1999; Faist, 2000; Vertovec, 2009), and the fact that migration processes are now set within multi-layered governance structures and not solely managed by nation states (Glick Schiller et al., 1992; Favell, 2003; Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2011).

Conceptually there are various ways in which migrants are traditionally framed as becoming part of a 'new' society. Problems of terminology have arisen because scholars in different places use different terms to examine ensuing interactions between migrants and host societies (Castles et al., 2002; Favell, 2005; Penninx et al., 2008). Migration is encapsulated within an array of frameworks including assimilation, acculturation, integration and transnationalism. Assimilation theory can be traced back to the Chicago School when Park and Burgess (1925) advanced the idea of straight line assimilation. Since then the concept has been significantly developed according to conceptions of mobility. Portes and Zhou (1993) in their segmented assimilation model show evidence of upward and downward mobility and later Alba and Nee (2003) argue for the predominance of upward mobility. Even though migration has long impacted on European countries (Zolberg and Woon, 1999; Alba et al., 2012), theorisation only occurred relatively recently and with many different conceptions including multiculturalism, integration and assimilation. In the UK this was effectively from the 1960s onwards where a multicultural-pluralist model prevailed.

Contemporary approaches show how both integration and assimilation can be considered in more sophisticated ways and with many parallels between the two (Favell, 2001; Vermeulen and Penninx, 2001). Commonalities include account of wider social structures and contexts and so Alba (2005, p.21) examines how 'an immigrant minority group can achieve parity of life chances with their peers in the ethnic majority'. Thus relations between host societies and migrant groups can be considered as a two way process.

Clearly there are many facets to migration, and more specifically, 'integration' (Reitz, 2002; Entzinger and Biezeveld, 2003; Penninx, 2005). Throughout Europe integration remains the most popular way of conceptualising the relationship between migrants and society (Favell, 2003). But it is also a highly contested term with continuing debate over its conceptual meaning and its application in research, policy and practice (Robinson, 1998; Castles et al., 2002; Hamberger, 2009). Whilst early research conceived integration as a one-way sociological process of assimilation to a core or 'mainstream' society (Park and Burgess, 1969; Gordon, 1964), integration is now considered a two-way process of mutual adaption and accommodation (Castles et al., 2002; Alba and Nee, 2003). However, it is sometimes viewed as a politically charged concept and an objective of government policy to 'socially engineer society' (Favell, 2003). Musterd and Ostendorf (2009) describe a disconnection between integration as framed and envisioned by the state and the lived experiences of migrants. Freeman (2004) conceptualises the complexity of integration processes as 'a patchwork of multidimensional frameworks'. Integration takes place in different domains, through various facilitators and can be assessed against several means and markers (Ager and Strang, 2008). It cuts across many facets of society involving an array of structures and agents including the institutional environment, service providers and local communities. The receiving society is thus an equally significant player in migration processes. Integration involves access to rights and resources such as housing, employment and education, but also encompasses broader issues that concern equality of opportunity, social and cultural inclusion and acceptance by local communities. This thesis aims to theoretically and empirically unpack these concepts using a study of contemporary migration to Northern Ireland as a new destination.

Northern Ireland provides an interesting case to study migration for two reasons. First it represents what has been described as a 'new destination'. Whilst a significant proportion of migration research focuses on traditional gateway cities, less is known about migration to areas with little history or experience of immigration (Massey, 2010; McAreavey, 2012).

This also reflects global patterns of migration away from typically urban areas to more rural or peripheral destinations (Jentsch and Simard, 2009; Marrow, 2013; McAreavey, forthcoming 2014). Societies with little history of immigration raise important questions on how migrants find their way where there is little infrastructure or few mechanisms to accommodate them. State and civil society responses to these changes are also critical.

The second reason concerns the unusual socio-political landscape of Northern Ireland as a society still coming to terms with a historical legacy of conflict and division. Northern Ireland remains polarised along strong ethno-religious identities, with division manifested through residential segregation, a segregated education system and fractured social relations (Shirlow and Murtagh, 2006). To a large extent these binary divisions continue to dominate the political agenda, with migration issues arguably of lower priority. Recent migration research recognises that context matters, with space and place forming an important backdrop to migration processes (Cadge et al., 2009; Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2009 and 2011; Crul and Schneider, 2010; Crul and Mollenkopf, 2012). The context of Northern Ireland adds an additional dynamic to understanding how migrants handle this situation and how it may structure migration and integration processes. Although there have been some efforts to address the impact of migration on society in Northern Ireland (Hainsworth, 1998; Gilligan and Ball, 2011; Gilligan et al., 2011), little is known on how the specific context of this region is impacting on the experiences and life chances of migrants.

Despite the scale of new migration to Northern Ireland over the last decade, the way in which integration processes are unfolding remains largely unexamined. The patterns and profiles of EU migrants have been documented (Gilligan, 2008; Bell et al., 2009; NIA, 2011 and 2012). There are preliminary studies on the immediate issues facing migrant communities (Bell et al., 2004; Bell et al., 2009; Jarman, 2006; Jarman and Byrne, 2007) and valuable insights into migrants' lived experiences (McAreavey, 2010 and 2012). Previous research provides an important baseline, but there are clear gaps in understanding how migration processes are unravelling in society. Earlier research reveals that EU migrants seek to better their life chances in Northern Ireland; they migrate in search of employment, to hone language skills, gain new experiences, and in recent years, are making plans to settle more permanently. But there are questions over the extent to which migrants can fulfil these motivations. As EU nationals they have a right to live and work in other EU Member States as equal citizens, but the question remains: can migrants reach their potential and achieve their ambitions?

Migration as a research topic is not unique, but the concept of migration to new destinations is an emerging area of research. This thesis encompasses a study of migrants in two areas of Northern Ireland, along with fieldwork conducted in Ithaca, Upstate New York. Ithaca is a semi-rural area also considered a new destination that has experienced an increase in Mexican and Latino farmworkers in recent years. The purpose of this case study is to put into context the internationalisation of migration phenomena, in searching for comparisons on how these processes are played out and managed in different contexts.

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

After outlining the various debates and arguments in migration research the aim of this thesis is to:

- Examine and understand how EU migrants' life chances are mediated by state and civil society structures in Northern Ireland as a new migration destination

This aim will be achieved using the following objectives that will:

1. Critically analyse existing conceptual ideas in migration research to construct and apply a theoretical framework for studying contemporary migration processes
2. Investigate the context of Northern Ireland as a new migration destination
3. Empirically examine migrants' agency using their experiences, actions and decision making processes
4. Empirically examine and evaluate the role of the state and civil society in facilitating and managing migration processes
5. Reflect on the empirical findings to assess the contribution of structure and agency as a theoretical perspective in migration research

The concepts of structure and agency will form the theoretical framework of this research. This approach is valuable given the conceptual and empirical challenges identified in existing knowledge on migration processes. Migration research does not adequately capture the links between macro scale phenomenon and the micro activities and behaviours of migrants. Employing case study methods, the research aim and objectives will be investigated using an interpretive strategy that will examine migrants' experiences, alongside the perspectives of the state and civil society structures in accommodating

integration processes. The research design will adopt a primarily qualitative strategy using in-depth interviews with migrants and various actors, but will include the use of secondary quantitative data to examine regional trends in migration patterns and local community perspectives.

1.4 Structure of the Argument

This thesis consists of eight chapters. This chapter presents the background, rationale and the research aim and objectives under investigation. The remaining chapters are outlined below.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 critically reviews the migration research literature thereby providing an overview of past traditions, current debates and key knowledge gaps. The chapter synthesises theoretical and conceptual ideas within migration scholarship to provide context for the conceptual framework that is presented in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 presents the conceptual framework that will guide the investigation. Built on structuration theory it outlines a theoretical lens for studying contemporary migration processes. It identifies the limitations of previous theoretical approaches in migration research and demonstrates the contribution and value of employing a structuration perspective. The chapter outlines how structuration theory will be applied theoretically and empirically in the study.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 provides the methodological context for the research. It discusses key paradigms of knowledge production in the social sciences, before examining approaches that typify migration research. The chapter outlines and justifies the primarily qualitative research strategy, design and methods adopted in this study. It considers important methodological issues for understanding the research process and concludes with the strategy used for data analysis and interpretation.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 presents the first of three empirical and analytical chapters. It outlines and discusses the multi-level governance framework, from the European to the local level, all of which regulate migration processes. The chapter describes the characteristics of recent migration trends and elaborates on why the unusual socio-political landscape of Northern Ireland is an important backdrop to migration, thereby contextualising Northern Ireland as a new migration destination. The chapter focuses on the attitudes of the local population by drawing on secondary quantitative data to examine how migration processes are represented and mediated in Northern Ireland.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 investigates employment and housing as critical resources for migrants' integration. It does so by examining the characteristics and trends behind migrants' employment and housing situations, both regionally across Northern Ireland and specific to the participants in this study. It considers how migrants access employment, their inclusion in the workplace and how this shapes their employment mobility. It then investigates how migrants' housing options are differentiated by tenure, before examining key themes that determine housing decision making processes, access and choice.

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 builds on the preceding chapter by focusing more closely on how migrants use agency outside of regulatory spaces. Processes of integration are mediated by multiple and variegated forms of structure within the state and civil society including: state agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGO's), community and voluntary groups, the private sector and local communities. This chapter examines how each of these different structures function in facilitating and managing migration processes.

Chapter 8

Chapter 8 consolidates the key findings of the research and identifies the contributions to knowledge. These contributions focus on the implications for migration research theoretically, but also provide insights relevant to policy and practice. The chapter ends with a reflection of the research process and suggests areas for further research.

CHAPTER 2

Patterns and Approaches in Migration Research

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of patterns and approaches in the field of migration research. It offers a synopsis of both past traditions and current research strands to identify key knowledge gaps that will become the subject of this thesis. After providing the rationale for the study in Chapter 1, this chapter outlines and critically reviews key developments and debates within migration scholarship, before addressing the theoretical framework that will guide the investigation in Chapter 3. First it outlines how migration research has been dealt with in the past. It considers how this multidisciplinary research field, with vast theoretical and conceptual perspectives, has generated extensive debate on how we theorise and analyse migration phenomena. The second section focuses more specifically on the subject of migrant integration. Integration is a highly debated term, yet its contestation poses significant questions on how we conceptualise and empirically examine migrants' positioning in society. The third section focuses on contemporary processes and new directions in migration research. It highlights current predicaments that pervade migration scholarship and considers ways forward in developing a framework that captures the complexity of modern migration processes.

2.2 Traditions in Migration Research (1)

Migration is a widely researched field with a diverse and voluminous literature. Migration research is indeed multidisciplinary, but as Brettell and Hollifield (2000) point out, there is no shared paradigm in studying this subject. Consistent with this assertion migration has occupied disciplines such as law, anthropology, economics, sociology, geography and political science. However, as Massey et al. (1993) argue, these various fields have often evolved in parallel rather than being complementary to each other, producing a highly fragmented research literature. The focus of this research is to respond to the knowledge gaps created between these disciplines and the associated plea from various quarters for new lines of enquiry in developing more innovative approaches in studying migration phenomena. This section provides an overview on how migration research has evolved. Aside from the various disciplinary approaches, the nature of migration scholarship has also varied spatially across the globe. This is particularly evident in North America and in Europe,

where the diversity in migration patterns brought about by various political, social and economic contexts, has led to many contrasting yet complementary approaches (Portes and DeWind, 2004). This section, together with Sections 2.3 and 2.4, aim to highlight key theoretical phases and various conceptual understandings that have infused migration research. It illustrates how these different approaches have shaped the agendas of researchers, by discussing how the migration research field has developed given the challenges of contemporary migration.

Theoretical Approaches in Migration

The study of migration has been subject to research for as long as the act of migration itself (Massey et al., 1998). Accounting for people's movement and the consequences of those movements inevitably involve human stories and these matters continue to attract attention from researchers and policy makers alike. A wide range of theoretical perspectives and conceptual ideas constitute migration research. It has traditionally focused on two specific aspects of the migration process; the first is concerned with the initiation and perpetuation of movement, and the second with how migrants encounter the process of settlement in immigration destinations (Kivisto and Faist, 2010). Although these two facets have shaped the study of migration research since the late nineteenth century, new patterns and dynamics of migration continue to challenge their theoretical merit when examining contemporary migration processes.

This section provides a brief overview of the first strand of theoretical perspectives in migration. These approaches are summarised by several scholars and offer multiple, yet overlapping, classifications as outlined in Table 2.1.[1] The intricacies of each approach are not central to this thesis, however evaluations of their bearing on modern migration has raised questions over the application and relevance of theory in migration scholarship. It is well known that economic theories have laid the foundations and dominated migration research (Castles and Miller, 2003). Two key approaches are macro scale and micro scale economics; the former attributing migration to large scale structural disparities in wage and labour between countries, and the latter to migrants making individual rational decisions based purely on economic motives (O'Reilly, 2012). Economic theories have since gone through considerable refinement, with new economics, labour market approaches and

[1] For comprehensive overviews refer to Boyle et al., 1998; Massey et al., 1993 and 1998; Brettell and Hollifield, 2000; Castles and Miller, 2003; Samers, 2010 and O'Reilly, 2012.

world systems theories recognising that individuals are not the sole unit of analysis[2], but rooted in wider decision making practices and embedded in large scale global processes (Samers, 2010). From a macro perspective, economic explanations have also adopted more structuralist approaches, focusing on the role of the global political economy and the associated neoliberal paradigm.

Theoretical paradigms in migration research	
Zolberg (1989)	Historical, structural, globalist, critical
Massey et al. (1993,1994 and 1998)	Neoclassical economics (macro and micro theory), new economics, dual labour market theory, world systems theory, network, theory, institutional theory, cumulative causation, migration systems theory
Boyle et al. (1998)	Determinist, humanist, integrated
Brettell and Hollifield (2000)	Relational, structuralist, transnational, rationalist, functionalist, institutionalist
Castles and Miller (2003)	Economic, historical-structural, migration systems theory, new interdisciplinary approaches, transnational theory
Portes (2010)	Neoclassical, new economics, world systems, social networks
Samers (2010)	Determinist (Ravenstein's laws, neo-classical economics, behavioural, new economics, dual and segmented labour market, structuralist) and integrative/mixed (social networks, transnationalism, gender sensitive and structurationist)
O'Reilly (2012)	Economic, historical-structural, migration systems theory

Table 2.1 Theoretical paradigms in migration research

In an attempt to draw distinction between theories Samers (2010) categorises two key approaches: 'determinist' and 'integrative'. With determinist focusing primarily on economics, integrative approaches draw attention to the role of social networks, migration systems, the emerging paradigm of transnationalism, and most recent a structurationist perspective. With determinist accounts of migration criticised for their individualistic outlook, migration researchers recognise the limitations of purely functionalist and

[2] An individual as the primary unit of analysis in migration is often referred to as 'methodological individualism' (see Samers, 2010), with advocates of this approach viewing the motivations, decisions and actions of migrants as the most important aspect when understanding social phenomena.

structuralist perspectives (Bakewell, 2010). It is important to note that none of these prevalent theories are without their inadequacies or deemed as remedying the limitations of previous endeavours. What is clear however is that migration cannot be attributed to one single causal mechanism (Samers, 2010). A major criticism of previous theories centres on their exclusivity to specific 'levels' or 'units' of analysis (Brettell and Hollifield, 2000). Scholars have since urged for a departure from such rigid classifications and a focus on a more multi-level framework (Faist, 2000; Bakewell, 2010; Samers, 2010; O'Reilly, 2012). These new approaches call for scholars to bridge multiple perspectives in migration and to articulate the links between both structural forces and individual agency in the migration process.

2.3 Traditions in Migration Research (2)

The second strand in migration research, traditionally regarded as the ways in which migrants settle in new destinations, has attracted equally widespread theoretical and conceptual debate. Similar to the first strand in the preceding section, the way in which migrants' adapt to their new destinations has proceeded through several conceptual phases. These various approaches have originated within specific geographical contexts, in the use of terms such as assimilation (North America) and integration (Europe). They have also evolved over time with the changing nature and dynamics of migration and the rise of transnational living (Faist, 2000 and 2013; Vertovec, 2009). This section provides an overview of how these various concepts have been introduced, why they continue to be controversial subjects in both academic, social and policy debates and what relevance they have in contemporary migration scholarship.

The Origins of Assimilation

It is widely recognised that theories of immigrant assimilation emerged within a North American context. Park and Burgess's well known definition of assimilation described 'a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments and attitudes of other persons or groups, and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life' (Park and Burgess, 1969, p.735). In the early 1900s the Chicago School became the key champion in the study of race and ethnic relations. The social fabric of the American environment was viewed as strongly influencing the process of assimilation. The sociological ideas of Robert Park, together with other key figures in the Chicago School, are recognised as the foundations in the

development of assimilation theory (Kivisto and Faist, 2010). Responding to waves of American immigration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, led to Park's formulation of the 'race relations cycle'; a cycle whereby social contact, competition and accommodation would result in eventual assimilation between groups with disparate social and biological characteristics.

The foundational ideas of Park were furthered in 1964 when Gordon's *Assimilation in American Life* attempted to offer greater conceptual synthesis of assimilation. Whilst Park's work was from a sociological perspective, Gordon approached from a psychological angle. Gordon identified several conditions of assimilation including: change in cultural behaviour (acculturation); structural engagement into the societal network of groups and institutions; intermarriage; identification based on a sense of peoplehood with the host society; absence of prejudiced attitudes and discriminatory behaviour; and civic assimilation through the absence of value and power conflict (Gordon, 1964, p.71). Structural assimilation, whereby minority groups form relationships with the majority, was the primary instrument that would initiate other conditions of assimilation. However, as claimed by Alba and Nee (1997, p.829) this outlook was fundamentally limited in the sense that it was 'orientated to a microsociological account of assimilation not conceptually integrated to larger social processes'.

In spite of Gordon's dimensional approach to assimilation, the process was still conceived as an inevitable one way method of adaptation to a core society. Supporting the metaphorical expression of the 'melting pot', assimilation was to promote the socio-cultural blending of people to form a 'mainstream society'. Gordon's account was merely a set of indicators of assimilation, reduced to a quantifiable process that was later challenged both empirically and methodologically (Alba and Nee 2003). After Park and Gordon it was established that assimilation was not a linear process of migrants conforming to the norms of a majority society (Rumbaut, 1997). Herbert Gans (1992), an exponent of Gordon, popularised the notion of 'straight line assimilation', later termed the 'bumpy line theory of ethnicity'. He recognised a generational element of assimilation between immigrants and their descendants. In a similar effort, Portes and Zhou (1993) forwarded the idea of 'segmented assimilation', claiming that immigrants' experiences of adapting to new societies may have differential outcomes between individuals, groups and generations.

Despite the limited scope of earlier conceptions of assimilation, the concept has received scholarly support (Alba and Nee 1997, 2003). Referred to as 'new assimilation', Alba and Nee (2003, p.1) argue that as a concept it has 'not lost its utility', recognising the foundational notion of assimilation 'as an ethnocentric and patronising imposition on minority peoples struggling to retain their cultural and ethnic integrity'. Influenced by new institutional theories derived from the traditions of Weber and Durkheim, they consider both the actions of individuals embedded in the institutional environment, with mechanisms that operate at different levels between individuals, groups and institutions. The inadequacy of previous sociological assumptions prompted Alba and Nee to introduce the concept of 'context bound rationality', whereby the choices, actions and behaviours made by individuals are bound by the institutional environment.

This new theoretical approach was based on the idea that assimilation is a fundamental social process, affected by causal mechanisms that shape the trajectories of migrants in new destinations. Differentiating between proximate mechanisms (shaped by the agency of migrants, or 'forms of capital') and distal mechanisms (structures and institutional arrangements within the state or labour market), Alba and Nee (2003) identify the limitations of traditional assimilation as failing to uncover the true dynamics between the characteristics of migrants and the contextual environment of their new society. Four key mechanisms of new assimilation processes were identified including: the purposive actions of individuals in fulfilling their motivations for migration; the influence of network mechanisms in imposing societal norms; the possession, acquisition and transfer of different forms of capital; and institutional structures in inferring rules, norms and values within societies. Essentially, Alba and Nee's theoretical approach attempted to remedy the limitations of earlier theorists, recognising the institutional and social environment as equally important in determining levels of opportunity and constraint. In examining the process of assimilation they stress that there is 'no single causal mechanism'. A distinguishing feature of new assimilation theory was the rejection of ethnocentrism, with society no longer regarded as homogenous, or with outcomes solely reliant on the actions of migrants.

What is clear from the work of American sociology is that conceptions of assimilation were rooted in the historical experiences of American immigration. Within this fixed framework, assimilation was initially associated with nation building and 'Americanisation' (Alba, 2003). Undoubtedly, assimilation studies have shaped North American research agendas, but they

have also laid the foundations for subsequent waves of migration in different spatial, political and socio-economic contexts. Conceptions of assimilation have gone through considerable refinement, to the extent that some would argue that its current meaning is indicative of the development of integration in Europe (Favell, 2001; Vermeulen and Penninx, 2001).

From Assimilation to Integration

The theoretical history of assimilation has remained largely associated with a North American context. How this concept has evolved and shaped migration research agendas more widely, has led to powerful debates on how we conceptualise and empirically examine migration phenomena beyond the USA (Favell, 2001). Assimilation and integration have since become two of the most popular, yet controversial, terms used to describe how migrants 'may' become part of new societies; with the notion that migrants should or need to become 'part of something' now equally challenging (Favell, 2001). Other terms such as acculturation, incorporation, adaption, inclusion, insertion and accommodation have also been utilised, but in most instances are used interchangeably (Castles et al., 2002). Appearing extensively throughout the literature, these concepts have become subject to continual debate over their operational meaning and utility in current research.

It is evident that migration discourses have become loaded with 'contradictory positions, a diversity of definitions, and conceptual puzzlement' (Hamberger, 2009, p.2). There have been numerous attempts by scholars of immigration and related fields to construct definitions for each of these concepts (Castles et al., 2002; Favell, 2001, 2003; Hamberger, 2009; Vermeulen and Penninx, 2001). With regards to the use of alternative terms, some would argue that the particular undertones implied by such concepts are suggestive of either positive or negative orientations towards the process of migrant integration. As claimed by Castles et al. (2002, p.139) 'concepts take on the social meaning that they are given by powerful groups and institutions'. This is not to down play the importance of having an operational concept, as the particular nuances suggested by a term may have significant implications for policy formulation and the dynamics of social processes. However, less emphasis on conceptual refinement and a greater focus on the dynamics of migration processes are now regarded as being more significant.

Integration: From outcomes to processes

The use of integration as a concept first appeared in Europe in the 1960-70s, becoming prominent in western European policy discourse from the late 1980s (Favell, 2001). A key reason for integration becoming the preferred terminology in Europe lies within the history and context of immigration patterns. North America is regarded as a country built on immigration, whereas in Europe, immigration and integration became a feature for countries already built on strong nationhood (Favell, 2003). This created debate on whether these terms were allied or competing concepts between their respective jurisdictions.[3]

Integration in Europe was at first regarded as a revolt against assimilation. An early definition by Jenkins (1967, p.267) described, 'not a flattening process of assimilation, but as equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance'. In a similar way, Cashmore (1994, p.172) spoke of 'a condition in which different ethnic groups are able to maintain boundaries and uniqueness, while participating equally in the essential processes or production, distribution and government'. These early conceptions fashioned integration as the new assimilation (Vermeulen and Penninx, 2001). Despite the illusion that integration was deemed a cure for the limits of assimilation, evidence was gathering on integration becoming a politically charged concept and an objective of government policy (Favell, 2001). Integration was concerned with the functioning of the state and the goal of immigration policies for government to 'socially engineer society' and contribute to the political project of building the nation state society (Favell, 2003). Nevertheless, integration is an important concept in European policy discourse and in government approaches to managing migration (Penninx et al., 2008).

In a conceptual survey aimed at understanding integration in the UK, Castles et al. (2002, p.112) claim that 'meanings vary from country to country, change over time, and depend on the interests, values and perspectives of the people concerned'. Furthermore, integration is often 'based on a set of assumptions, concepts and definitions that are often tacit rather than explicit'. This supports Vermeulen and Pennnix's (2000, p.2) classification of 'integration regimes' evident in European countries, suggesting that integration takes on different meanings that may be of 'a more pluralistic or more assimilationist kind'. More

[3] It is important to point out that integration in Europe has meaning on two different spatial scales; the first concerned with the integration of immigrants within nation states, and the second with reference to the larger scale process of building cohesion and integration between EU countries (Favell, 2003).

recent research reinforces the notion that context matters significantly (Crul and Schneider, 2010; Crul and Mollenkopf, 2012). Comparable studies of second generation migrants in western European and North American cities reveal how employment experiences, educational achievement, community participation and sense of belonging can vary in different societal contexts. For example, context can refer to institutional structures, legislation and policy discourses, employment and housing markets and social and political arrangements, all of which can influence migrants' reception in new destinations.

This led to later definitions that consider integration broadly as 'the process of becoming an accepted part of society' (Penninx, 2005, p.141). Subsequently, it has been argued that integration should be used as an 'umbrella term' under which varying subordinate concepts can then take precedence, such as assimilation or multiculturalism (Hamberger, 2009, p.3). Integration is still frequently referred to as a 'difficult to define concept' with no universally accepted meaning (Favell, 2003). Robinson (1998, p.118) has described a 'chaotic concept...used by many but understood differently by most'. Favell (2001, p.352) goes further to argue that academics as well as policy makers use integration simply because it 'best fits the undefined conceptual space', without adequate scrutiny of the term. Integration 'partly builds its success on swallowing up other similar, but more precise, partial or politically unfashionable terms for the same kind of process' (Favell, 2001, p.352).

Another conundrum within the debate contests whether integration is a 'process' or a 'condition' (Castles et al., 2002). The most significant conceptual advancement is that integration should be regarded as a 'two-way process' (Castles et al., 2002; Feldman, 2008). Two-way in the sense that it involves mutual adaption and accommodation by both migrants and the receiving society. As a process integration is not fixed, but takes place 'in particular spheres, entail(s) different velocities, as well as variable trajectories and outcomes' (Castles et al., 2002, p.126). As suggested by Favell (2001, p.353) it should be a 'multiple process, to evoke change that is mutual and organic in some way'. Despite its contested nature, theoretical and empirical work continues in striving to construct a framework for examining the complexity and fluidity that surrounds integration. Notwithstanding these endeavours, integration continues to be presented as a condition that can be accurately observed or in some way 'measured', with policy discourses preoccupied with ways in which this may, or may not, be achieved.

Integration is continually cited as having specific dimensions to include economic, social, political and cultural aspects, and taking place within particular societal domains such as employment, housing, health and education (Entzinger and Biezeveld, 2003; Penninx, 2005). However, it is also recognised that integration is not just about formal inclusion into the institutional and regulatory structures of the new society, but incorporating a host of other issues based on rights, respect, identity, belonging and tolerance (Reitz, 2002). A recent endeavour by Ager and Strang (2008) identified key components for a conceptual framework of integration to include: means and markers; social connections; facilitators; and foundations of rights and citizenship. These elements essentially provide a framework for examining the various aspects of integration, but with the links, interactions and dynamics between these components largely unexplored in research studies (Ager and Strang, 2008). Empirical work rarely goes beyond 'surface studies' and without delving into theoretical propositions and empirical mechanisms, they do little to advance knowledge of these processes more fully. Migration has become a process of interconnected phenomena that needs to consider the dynamics of integration within a complete societal structure.

Integration, despite its contested nature, is still widely used in describing and analysing the process of immigrant's reception into new societies. Simultaneously it has also been theoretically and methodologically challenged, with Favell (2003) advocating for a way out of the current paradigm. The nature of globalisation is now deemed as challenging the idea of integration. Favell (2003) draws on the work of scholars in the field of transnationalism who advocate a need to go beyond the 'container society' approach. It is argued that the strategies migrants' adopt to assist their integration extend beyond the receiving society of immigration (Glick Schiller et al., 1995; Portes, 2003). The actions of migrants can often fall outside the formal and institutionalised structures of the state, through informal economies and unconventional forms of social organisation. As Favell (2003) argues we need to challenge the longstanding assumption that the 'state' and 'society' are the unitary backdrop of integration processes.

Transnationalism and the Challenges of Integration

Following the widespread critiques of integration, the early 1990s witnessed a significant theoretical turn with the adoption of a transnational perspective in analysing contemporary migration patterns and processes (Glick Schiller et al., 1992, 1995; Portes et al., 1999; Faist, 2000; Vertovec, 2009). The thrust of the transnational argument purports that migrants do not become entirely disconnected from their homeland, but maintain linkages in the form

of economic, political and socio-cultural activities (Portes et al., 1999). Preconceptions of the immigrant experience as complete upheaval and resettlement without homeland relations is no longer the classic image of immigration. A key turning point in the transnational argument was recognition that migrants' transnational activities are not new phenomenon (Glick Schiller, 1997; Portes et al., 1999; Portes, 2003). Since the earliest forms of human migration there have always been ways in which migrants have retained connections with their homeland. The consensus among scholars is that although the process itself is not new, it offers a new theoretical lens in understanding a process that has gained momentum in recent decades (Glick Schiller et al., 1992; Levitt et al., 2003; Vertovec, 2009; Faist, 2013).

Transnationalism provides a fresh theoretical perspective, but also brings conceptual and methodological challenges. Glick Schiller et al.'s (1992) foundational account emphasised how social science and migration research needs to become 'unbound', going beyond the study of nationalism and examining the processes that transcend nation states. It is evident that transnationalism is rooted in larger global processes. Portes (1996) contends that transnationalism is a response to 'the social and economic forces unleashed by contemporary capitalism', where a 'time-space compressing' global infrastructure and technological innovation have facilitated transnational activities. However, as Kivisto and Faist (2010) argue we cannot resort to technological determinism, as there must be more social factors that contribute to the transnational paradigm. Transnationalism is a multi-layered social process that operates across many spatial scales and within the realms of the state, society and individual. Driven by global capitalism and social change, the process is regulated and shaped by global, national and local contexts, and indeed, the more nuanced aspects of everyday life.

Central to the debate is the position of transnationalism with respect to assimilation or integration. Whether these processes are completely incompatible, represent an intermediate or transition stage, or offer an alternative form of integration, is an on-going inquiry for researchers (Kivisto and Faist, 2010). With both phenomena now recognised as interconnected rather than mutually exclusive, Portes (2001) has elaborated on how transnationalism can produce considerable forces in shaping integration processes. Scholars have acknowledged the significance of transnationalism with investigations into the interactions and inner dynamics between these two processes starting to emerge (Morawska, 2004; Snel et al., 2006; Muzzucato, 2008). Studies of transnational

engagements have revealed a pattern of individuals participating 'in selective transnationalism as well as selective assimilation into their host societies' (Levitt et al., 2003, p.570). Mazzucato's (2008) study into the lives of Ghanaian migrants in the Netherlands has illustrated a 'double engagement', whereby transnational economic exchanges between the two countries show how migrants adopt strategies that allow them to anchor themselves and their networks in both societies.

The field of transnational studies is an emerging area of research that requires further theoretical synthesis and empirical investigation. Whilst the intricacies of the process are still being unravelled, we cannot dismiss its significance as a social process that may have salient ramifications for integration in receiving societies. The question as to whether integration and transnationalism are coexisting or competing processes is still subject to debate (Vertovec, 2009). However, what is certain is that transnational activities give an additional dimension to the study of migration. This section, together with Section 2.2, addresses the multiple theoretical perspectives and conceptual difficulties that have dominated migration scholarship. Most significant, it has highlighted the lack of agreement on how we should theorise and examine migration processes. What is clear is that migration research needs to consider the complexity of modern migration processes. It needs to take into account the multiple perspectives and layers that encompass such phenomena; the dynamics between structures that influence migration and agency of migrants.

2.4 The Limits of Theory and the Migration Impasse

Theorisation in migration has reached a stage whereby some declare an impasse (Bakewell, 2010). The dissatisfaction with earlier theories has stemmed from several 'common pitfalls' (Portes, 1997) and ongoing debates that continue to question if and how theory can be applied to such dynamic, complex and multifaceted phenomena (Zolberg, 1989; Massey et al., 1993; Portes, 2010). The ongoing quest for an all-encompassing single theory of migration is now considered neither possible nor desirable (Castles, 2010). However, there is consensus that theoretical frameworks need to become more critical and progressive (Bakewell, 2010). Undoubtedly the scale, momentum and patterns of migration have changed significantly in recent decades: modern migration is more fluid, complex and dynamic. Indeed, as with many phenomena, new social realities are demanding more innovative and flexible frameworks to allow effective analysis and understanding (Samers,

2010). Massey et al. (1993) argue that migration needs a set of theories or concepts that does not rely on particular assumptions or models, but encompasses a range of perspectives and levels. Whilst migration has classically focused on causes and consequences, new approaches are challenging this traditional breakdown.

In a systematic review of the current state of migration and integration research, Favell (2008, p.8) identifies three main gaps that fragment the field including: a 'lack of comparative research; a lack of cooperation between disciplines; and a lack of integration between the different levels at which phenomena are studied'. Concerned with the third barrier, a disjuncture between different levels and units of analysis in integration research is highlighted. It is commonly found that '(mostly qualitative) research on the micro-level of small groups does not seem to have any relation with (mostly quantitative) research on the aggregate level of groups or categories' (Favell, 2008, p.10). The interconnections and influences between each of these levels remains a relatively unexplored area. This does not mean that old approaches are no longer valid or need to be discounted, but the demand for a shift towards processes, such as the interaction between both structural and agential factors, is clearly evident (Goss and Lindquist, 1995; Morawska, 2001, 2009, 2011; Wolfel, 2005; Stones, 2005; Bakewell, 2010; O'Reilly, 2012; Vlase and Voicu, 2013).

2.5 Contemporary Processes and New Directions in Migration Research

Sections 2.2 and 2.3 demonstrated how migration research has been preoccupied with several theoretical models and conceptual phases in attempting to examine specific aspects of the migration process. Whilst it has been acknowledged that migration scholars are not dealing with a new phenomenon, it is apparent that traditional perspectives have come under considerable scrutiny, especially when faced with the changing nature, scale and dynamics associated with contemporary migration. This section will consider both new challenges and ongoing predicaments that continue to pervade the migration research field. These challenges include: (1) the diverse and complex patterns of modern migration to new destinations; (2) the evolving nature of globalisation and its influence and impact upon migration processes; and (3) the need for migration scholarship to address the emerging theoretical impasse by employing new lenses and perspectives to examine migration. This final section will consider each of these three strands, all of which are important for developing the conceptual framework of the thesis in Chapter 3.

New Geographies of Migration

Global patterns of migration have been documented in abundance throughout the migration literature (Boyle et al., 1998; Massey et al., 1998; Castles and Miller, 2003; Samers, 2010). Classically migration scholars have identified specific flows, trends and types of migration, which has led to a comprehensive understanding of international migration systems and streams. However, recent research has identified the movement of migrants to areas recognised as 'non-traditional', also termed 'new destinations', characterised by having little or no history of immigration (Singer, 2004; Lichter and Johnson, 2006, 2009). Similar to theories on assimilation processes, identification of these new destinations has emerged primarily within the North American academic literature. However, similar patterns can also be found within a European context, with new patterns of east-west movement within the recently expanded EU (Favell, 2008; Black et al., 2010).

In the USA, these new destinations have coincided with a changing migrant demography, with a disproportionate rise in Mexican and Latino (undocumented) migration to areas beyond 'gateway cities', but of specific interest to this study for example, to rural areas of New York State (Marrow, 2005; Mize et al., 2009; Massey, 2010). Enlargement of the EU has also led to a disproportionate rise of EU nationals into the UK, particularly Polish, and of greater significance in this thesis to Northern Ireland as a 'new destination' (McAreavey, 2012). In both contexts, new patterns of movement have been a response to international structures that essentially control migration. Within the EU, migration has been made possible through EU enlargement processes in both 2004 and 2007, which permits the free movement of EU nationals to other EU member states. However, in the USA the picture is much more complicated. Through a culmination of law and policy shifts, socio-political climates, economic restructuring and the changing geography of labour demand, undocumented Mexican and Latino migration to the USA has risen sharply since the 1990s (Massey and Capoferro, 2010). While some of these possible causes set out to control or reduce undocumented migration, they resulted in the opposite effect. Similarly within the UK, migration of EU nationals dramatically outnumbered government predictions.

These new trends are significant for several reasons. They reveal new patterns of migration, but they also raise questions on how migrants are impacting upon and being impacted by new destinations (Massey, 2010). Of concern to researchers are the ways in which migrants find their way in new settings (Valdivia and Dannerbeck, 2009; McAreavey, 2012; Sohoni and Bickham Mendez, 2012). With new destinations deemed as having weak infrastructure,

poor support mechanisms and little experience of effectively addressing the challenges of migration, new destinations provide a unique backdrop in which to study such phenomena. This has been the subject of a growing body of research (Jensen, 2006; Parra and Pfeffer, 2006) and it offers new perspectives on migration. For instance Kandel and Parrado (2005) examine the links between new settlements, industrial restructuring and the demand for immigrant labour in the US meat processing industry. Meanwhile Marrow (2005, 2013) uses a migrant position to compare migrants' integration against earlier notions of assimilation. Valdivia and Dannerbeck (2009) also examine the experiences and strategies adopted by migrants in new communities of the Midwest. There are similar studies in a European context with EU enlargement processes producing new east-west migration patterns (Favell, 2008). More specific to this study, research has examined the new mobility of EU migrants; predominantly Polish to the UK and Ireland (Burrell, 2012; Krings et al., 2013). Scholars have examined migrants' experiences with reference to the labour market (Cook et al., 2011; Sporton, 2013), but particularly interesting is the phenomenon of migration to new, rural and peripheral destinations (Jentsch, 2007; Jentsch et al., 2007; McAreavey, forthcoming 2014). The study of new destinations is an emerging research field, offering a unique backdrop to the study of contemporary migration and one that requires further examination.

Migration and Neoliberal Processes

Previous sections of this chapter demonstrate how various research strands have developed exclusively within the migration literature. Although migration scholarship is considered a multidisciplinary research field, it is evident that theoretical and empirical work remains largely confined to traditional migration paradigms. This is described as 'methodological nationalism' whereby the study of migration phenomena remains contained within the framework and functioning of nation states (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002; Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2009). Glick Schiller and Çağlar (2011) suggest that attention needs to turn to how migration processes are situated within and influenced by wider processes of globalisation. They advocate the need to bring together scholars of urban studies and neoliberal restructuring, alongside ethnographers and traditional migration researchers, to consider how neoliberal globalisation and the restructuring of cities affects migration. Neoliberalism is broadly defined as economic deregulation through open markets and free trade, brought about by a reduction in government spending and increased privatisation. In this context, Glick Schiller and Çağlar (2011) urge researchers to

consider how migrants' movement, settlement, and lately their transnationality, correspond with everyday socio-spatial processes.

Neoliberal processes are not the focus of this research, but it is important to acknowledge that they add new layers and contribute to the complexity of studying modern migration. Globalisation has undoubtedly produced an array of new political, economic and social arrangements. In conjunction, it has created new political economy structures, multi-level governance frameworks and hierarchies of power relations that infuse to produce complex and multifaceted outcomes for society. As a result, social processes are constituted across local, regional, national, transnational and global scales that interact to produce varying opportunity structures and agential constraints on migrants. Migrants have therefore become embedded in both the local and the global in what Swyngedouw (1997, 2004) describes as 'glocalisation'.

Previously, neoliberalism studies remained relatively untouched in migration scholarship. But recent endeavours seek to examine how shifts in governance, power and capital relationships influence and shape migration phenomena (Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2011). Clearly migration and globalising processes evolve in tandem with each other. But a significant theoretical question asks if the ways in which migration is studied has kept abreast of these processes. As Glick Schiller and Çağlar (2011, p.5) argue 'no longer can urban, regional, national, and global scales be easily understood as a nested set of institutional relationships'. Undoubtedly migration processes span and dissect local, regional, national and global boundaries. Indeed there have been attempts in transcending these boundaries through the study of transnational practices and the emergence of what Faist (2000) calls 'transnational social spaces'. However, the reluctance of researchers to depart from traditional frameworks prevails within migration scholarship.

Neoliberal processes present a complex context for understanding migration in the modern era. Glick Schiller and Çağlar (2011) claim that restructuring and rescaling processes can influence the trajectories or pathways of migrants' integration (or non-integration) into societies, questioning whether they become the subjects or agents of neoliberal restructuring processes. They refer to 'upscaled' and 'downscaled' cities; upscaled referring to traditional migrant destinations equipped with migrant services and support, and downscaled being those with little immigration experience and poor capacity for integration. Cadge et al., (2009, p.6) also respond to this shift by introducing the concepts

of scale, place and culture. They describe integration as 'a fluid process based on both individual and community level factors and thus, occurring differently depending on the neighbourhood, city or state'. They go on to label the 'cultural armature' of the city - its history, political economy and ethos towards immigrants, as an important component of integration. Using the concept of scale, they considered how contexts of reception 'are nested in larger geopolitical hierarchies' and how processes operate within and between the spectrum of local, national and global spaces. They argue that the construction of place, through the socio-political composition of space, and the resources available within such places also affects migrants' integration.

New Complexities and Theoretical Directions

This final section synthesises the various debates and predicaments within migration research. In doing so, it identifies key components that will become central to the research contextually, but also in developing a framework that better conceptualises migration phenomena in Chapter 3.

Cognisant of the theoretical impasse that has prevented researchers from taking account of several weaknesses in previous theoretical and conceptual endeavours, this study seeks to move beyond traditional functionalist and structuralist explanations. In doing so it acknowledges the multi-layered and complex interactions that encompass contemporary migration. This entails returning to a central goal in sociology that of linking the 'macro' with the 'micro'. The need to bridge structural influences and agential entities, the dualism between structure and agency, has therefore become a new compelling direction in migration research.

The second component is the subject of migrant integration and the need to focus on processes rather than outcomes. Scholarly debate on migrant settlement has moved on from a one-dimensional conception, whereby migrants conform to the norms, values and institutions of the receiving society. Emphasis has shifted from the individual characteristics and abilities of migrants, to the 'contexts of reception' (Reitz, 2002) shaped by the new society. The process of migration is now recognised as being influenced by many interrelated contextual factors. The multifaceted nature of migration intrinsically incorporates the elements of structure and agency. Migration processes are now viewed as spanning and dissecting many different units and levels of analysis in the migration process,

from the level of global structures, to the actions of individuals, and encompassing the many linkages and interactions between these components.

The third and final important aspect of this research is the significance of migration to new destinations and inherently the concept of context. These areas with little or no history of previous migration provide a unique backdrop from which to study immigration processes. New destinations not only produce challenges for migrants in navigating new and unfamiliar circumstances, but they also raise significant questions on how the state and civil society respond and manage new migration. Northern Ireland and its socio-political circumstances provide an unusual and interesting context to study migrant integration.

2.6 Summary

This chapter has provided a comprehensive overview of the various theoretical debates and conceptual concerns that prevail within migration scholarship. It has illuminated the theoretical limitations of earlier migration traditions in offering either functionalist or structuralist approaches to explaining social action. Accordingly, the chapter identifies the need to adopt new conceptual frameworks in response to the complexities and dynamics posed by modern migration. Theoretically and empirically it stresses the importance of examining migration as a process as opposed to a series of outcomes. Migrant integration is now regarded as an on-going process that encompasses many different facets and facilitators in society. The chapter also highlights the significance of migration to new destinations and specific to this study to Northern Ireland. Critically in this respect it concerns the ability of migrants in new destinations to negotiate a better life for themselves. The literature raises issues and questions about the agency of individuals and collectives to integrate, but also the configuration and power of structural influences in mediating this process. This thesis is interested in the extent to which migrants can exert agency and flex boundaries to integration. These boundaries may not always be overbearing and oppressive but can challenge migrants in their ability to conform to or resist such structures. The fusing of structure and agency in new migration research is therefore a fruitful area of work. Chapter 3 continues with this endeavour in developing the conceptual framework that will guide the empirical research.

CHAPTER 3

A Framework for Theorising Contemporary Migration

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to outline the theoretical framework for the research. Chapter 2 provided a synthesis of the key debates and conceptual concerns within migration scholarship. This chapter will outline structuration theory as the theoretical lens of the study and its relation to the research aim and objectives. The chapter is arranged as follows: firstly pertinent debates on social theory are presented before evaluating the key features, strengths and weaknesses associated with a structuration perspective. Theories of migration are then re-examined, before describing the contribution and value of employing a structuration approach. Specifically the chapter will focus on the theoretical and empirical application of structuration theory in this research.

3.2 Origins and Debates in Social Theory

Since the early nineteenth century the social sciences have been concerned with how the social world exists. With numerous competing ideologies and theoretical perspectives seeking to explain how society functions, the foundations of modern social science are frequently attributed to the ideas of Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim. Labelled as the trinity of social theory, the diverging theories of these influential sociological thinkers continue to question how modern societies evolve and reproduce. The prevailing argument in the social sciences focuses on the relationship between people and society. This entails engagement with the contrasting ideologies of materialism and idealism which are frequently set up in opposition as objectivism and subjectivism (Stones, 2008).

Marx, concerned with materialism, expressed his beliefs through his theories on society, economics and politics. Claiming that society is controlled purely by economic modes of production (capitalism) and the subsequent structural effects on wealth distribution, class relations and political control, he suppressed the notion that reality is in any way mentally or subjectively constructed (Jessop, 2008). On the other hand, Weber became more interested in the study of human social action. Advocating an anti-positivist approach, he believed that there were limits to objective knowledge and that social action should be studied through an interpretivist rather than purely empiricist means (Scaff, 2008).

Durkheim occupied a position between both Marx and Weber. Adopting a functionalist outlook he believed that society should be studied as a whole rather than examining at an individual level. Writing at a time of social upheaval in France, Durkheim was concerned with the effects that laws, religion and other social forces would have on society (Pope, 2008). Representing a more positivist opinion, he believed that only observable social facts serve to produce objective knowledge that can exert power over and beyond that of individual actions. With the writings of Marx, Weber and Durkheim forming the cornerstones of social theory, their ideas paved the way for subsequent scholars to adopt more middle ground approaches. Some would argue that the most notable are those of Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens. Influenced by both Marx's structuralist views and Weber's interpretive position, both scholars have attempted to reconcile objectivist and subjectivist thought.

Bourdieu, introducing the concept of 'habitus', views individuals as exerting certain dispositions, an amalgamation of the objective conditions that agents encounter and their subjective mental experiences (Wacquant, 2008). Bourdieu's 'habitus' is viewed as a process of social conditioning, in that the social world is made up of multiple forces that influence our perceptions, beliefs, values and actions. These conditions in turn influence behaviours, which encourage us to (re)produce practices and structures in society (Elliott, 2009). The habitus is put into practice through the experiences and interactions of everyday life; the way in which knowledge and information is communicated and interpreted that ultimately influences the organisation of society. It is the way in which social structures become embedded and internalised by various actors, with its features shaping how we think about the social world. The habitus illustrates how multifaceted the social world is and can be mediated in many ways; through people and organisations, social spaces such as the work place or local community, and through other mediums such as the media and the wider public domain. Bourdieu, interested in the concept of power, viewed the relationship between structures and agents as having equal ability to influence each other i.e. just as structures can invoke particular actions, social actors have the ability to create strategies that either work with or go against those structures (Elliott, 2009). In short, Bourdieu's theory was to 'neither reduce actors to mere supports of social processes nor elevate them to the source of all social things' (Elliott, 2009, p.143).

Similarly, Giddens views societal structures and individual agents as exhibiting a dual relationship in his theory of structuration, a relationship that will be explored further in

Section 3.3. Both scholars do not discount the extreme positions that Marx and Weber put forward, but as importantly noted by Stones (2005), it is imperative to acknowledge that these are not oppositional terms or mutually exclusive ideologies. The intention behind Bourdieu's and Giddens's thinking was to find an approach that does not exclusively rely on or promote either structures or agents.

The contrasting positions advocated by Marx and Weber have also been mirrored by migration theorists in questioning whether acts of migration and their consequences are the result of objective structural conditions controlling the actions of individuals, or the power of agents in influencing and having power over social processes (Brettell and Hollifield, 2000). These questions have been brought to the fore in migration research. As supported by Morawska (2011, p.2), a field as wide as migration research 'needs a coherent framework that encompasses a range of theoretical models' and one which accounts for the broad spectrum of phenomena related to international migration. After considering the ongoing debates in social theory regarding how the social world operates, and the need for a flexible theoretical framework within migration research, the following sections will justify the use of a structuration framework in this investigation. Section 3.3 will examine more closely the theory of structuration. Sections 3.4 and 3.5 then focus on recent migration studies that employ a structure-agency lens and how it will be applied empirically in the research.

3.3 Structuration Theory

Structuration theory as formulated by Giddens (1984) is used in a wide range of disciplines including education (Shilling, 1992), urban studies (Healey and Barrett, 1990) and also migration research (Goss and Lindquist, 1995; Halfacree, 1995; Wolfel, 2005; Morawska, 2001 and 2009; Bakewell, 2010; O'Reilly, 2012; Lacroix, 2013; Vlase and Voicu, 2013). It is concerned with how the social world comes into being, with the concept(s) of structure and agency used to explain the functioning of society. The interplay between structure and agency considers if and how individuals are able to make free and informed choices, and how agents, when situated in the structural environment of society, are constrained and enabled by these very contexts (Morawska, 2009). Central to Giddens's aim in developing a theory of structuration was his attempt to reconcile objectivist and subjectivist thought, without focusing solely on detached structural elements or on individual human agency (O'Reilly, 2012). The extent to which individuals act as free agents, in a manner dictated by social forces, or as suggested by recent developments the interaction between both

elements, is central to the debate. Studying processes and phenomena where the boundaries of causality are not clearly visible, but are intricately bound together, requires a theoretical framework that accommodates this characteristic. Structuration bridges the macro-micro divide; it contends that macro, meso or micro level influences alone cannot be held accountable for the creation and reproduction of social systems, but rather their dynamic interplay.

The macro-micro relationship is widely scrutinised. Macro phenomena may refer to large scale processes and trends such as capitalist economies or processes of social transformation, whereas micro level studies are often orientated towards the everyday behaviour and actions of individuals. While these approaches are recognised as having both strengths and limitations, sociological studies have moved on to consider how these two perceived polar entities interact with each other. This is aligned with modern theories of migration, where the interactions between multi-level influences are increasingly recognised as shaping migration processes (Wolfel, 2005). While studies have adopted macro structural perspectives, for example in studying the determinants of migration, they have also used functional aspects by examining the individual micro activities of migrants (Goss and Lindquist, 1995). Hence there is a clear gap in investigating the fundamental relationship between both individual and societal forces. Although studies have started to address this gap (Morawska, 2001 and 2009; O'Reilly, 2012; Vlase and Voicu, 2013), there is a need for further empirical evidence.

Structuration Theory: Key premises

The essence of structuration theory regards social structures and human agency as having a degree of reciprocity in both time and space in the (re)production of social life. Structure and agency as concepts are used extensively in research. However, they take on many different meanings and interpretations to the extent that they have become elusive concepts. Furthermore, structure and agency can interact and intertwine in complex ways and so there are inevitable grey areas; places where the boundary between the two is not entirely clear. Nonetheless, for the sake of clarity, the following sections attempt to clarify the meaning assigned to each. There is consensus that a degree of interdependency exists between these elements in which Giddens terms a 'duality', or 'dualism' as preferred by Archer (1995). The nature of this duality is contested and this matter will be examined in detail throughout this chapter.

What is Structure?

Structure in its broadest sense implies a form of patterning or arrangement. More precisely in sociological thought it refers to the form and organisation of society; recurrent patterned arrangements that influence or limit the choices and opportunities available. Structure is often deemed broad and hard to define (Sewell, 1992); trying to categorise or differentiate structures is problematic. Hence structures are often described as existing in many forms. In social science, they tend to be broadly categorised as economic, political or social structures, but can be further classified into categories that encompass legal and institutional arrangements. While structures tend to be conceptualised as macro level phenomena in the form of capitalism and labour markets, through political arrangements, or by social structures such as gender and class (Sewell, 1992), it is important to recognise that structure is present at many levels within society. Traditionally, but also in migration studies under the banner of 'methodological nationalism' (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002), state level structures were perceived as the largest force in shaping social phenomena. However, with the forces of globalisation producing effects of glocalisation, there has been a gradual breaking away from the nation state as the container of power and activity. As noted by Swyngedouw (1997, 2004), the emergence of multi-level governance structures in a neoliberal globalised order has resulted in processes of global rescaling whereby:

> 'institutional/regulatory arrangements shift from the national scale both upwards to supra-national or global scales and downwards to the scale of the individual body or to local, urban or regional configurations and, secondly, economic activities and inter-firm networks are becoming simultaneously more localised/regionalised and transnational' (Swyngedouw, 2004, p.25).

An example in migration would include inter-governmental organisations (IGOs) such as the EU, a more authoritative force in controlling migration above the powers of the nation state. This is not to suggest that the role of the nation state has been downplayed or is irrelevant, but multi-level governance structures have created new complex layers on top of migration processes. Structures are also manifested within the state and civil society in many guises. Structures can control how society is shaped and reproduced in many ways, from the macro level in the form of governance frameworks, through to the key functional realms of society such as employment, education, and housing structures. Structures also exist at more localised levels in the way that communities are organised, through the

delivery functions of agencies and organisations, and to the formation of networks and relational structures.

In order to theorise and put structure into practice, Giddens (1984) frames structures as the 'rules' and 'resources' that exert control over individual actions as illustrated in Table 3.1. This table also outlines what may be viewed as structures in migration phenomena, addressing a weakness in Giddens's work in failing to empirically apply structure.

The conceptualisation of structure	
Giddens	**Migration**
Structures as Rules	***Structures as Rules***
▪ Signification (meaning)	Governance structures
▪ Legitimation (norms and values)	Migration policy: rights and entitlements
Structures as Resources	***Structures as Resources***
▪ Domination (source of power/ the control of resources	Organisation and functioning of the state and civil society
1. Allocative resources (material features)	Employment, housing, health, education and welfare
2. Authoritative resources (organisation of life chances)	State agencies, community and voluntary sector, private sector, local communities

Table 3.1 The conceptualisation of structure

Giddens's framework thus views agents as possessing social power to engage with the available rules and allocative and authoritative resources in (re)producing social practices. A significant weakness in Giddens's work is his assumption that all agents have power, without questioning whether individuals exist as almost benign agents in simply reproducing social structure, or do they have the capacity to challenge and create new structures. This matter has also been raised by O'Reilly (2012, p.70) in that we need to examine how structures are not only (re)produced, but if and how they can be changed or modified by agents and their actions over time and space.

Giddens's conceptualisation of structure has thus come under close scrutiny (Sewell, 1992; Stones, 2005). The vagueness of his framework in leaving ambiguity around the categorisation of the social world into rules and resources has resulted in debate over what constitutes structure and how it is manifested in society. While Giddens viewed structures as virtual entities, existing only as 'memory traces' in agent's knowledge, this notion has

been largely dismissed. Sewell (1992), preferring to use 'cultural schemas' rather than rules, argues that as resources exist in time and space they must be actual rather than virtual. Regarding rules as schemas also allows the heterogeneity of rules to be captured. Sewell concludes that 'structure is dynamic, not static; it is the continually evolving outcome and matrix of a process of social interaction' (1992, p.27). Although structuralists would argue that actors are situated within and shaped by particular structural contexts, structure is not detached from agents, but provides the medium through which agents are empowered and are able to access and mobilise rules and resources.

What is Agency?

Agency is traditionally regarded as implying free will, choice and freedom. Agency is 'the capacity for social actors to reflect on their position, devise strategies and take action to achieve their desires' (Bakewell, 2010, p.1694). The agency perspective evolved from the subjectivist paradigm, with the view that actors are just as significant as structure in the reproduction of the social world (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998). There are a number of different conceptions of agency that are considered below (Giddens, 1984; Sewell, 1992; Emirbayer and Mische, 1998).

Giddens (1984) views agents as 'knowledgeable subjects' carrying out actions that are intentional, but with knowledge controlled by both unconscious behaviour and unintended consequences of action. In other words, the actions of individuals may not always be made with perfect knowledge of the situation or may not produce the preconceived outcomes of that action. Giddens's work draws heavily on Bourdieu and his notion of 'habitus', in that action is influenced by the characteristics and inherent capabilities of agents. In devising a model of agency, Giddens describes agents as becoming involved in a process of rationalising and reflexively monitoring actions, applying their knowledge of structures, and effectively (re)producing the structural environment. The 'habitus' is closely linked with the concept of social capital that has also been introduced to migration studies (Nee and Sanders, 2001; Garip, 2008; Nannestad et al, 2008; Zontini, 2009). Its application is limited however, with Evergeti and Zontini (2006) identifying several weaknesses: an overemphasis on the positive role of social capital; a lack of attention to power relations within social capital networks; and how social capital within groups does not consider the role and broader implications for migrants in receiving societies.

Agency is closely linked to the notion of power i.e. agency can be constrained. It perceives individuals as having a certain degree of knowledge and capacity to act in certain situations. Giddens explains the agency-power relationship through the 'dialectic of control' whereby all social actors have access to power, but its realisation depends on agents' knowledge and ability to use power. Like Bourdieu, Giddens views agency almost like a static property, consisting of the habitus, routine practice and repetitive action (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998). Giddens is criticised for his assumption that all agents have access to power and are able to exercise power, failing to elaborate on how power is gained, used and altered in the structuration process (Stones, 2005). Briones (2009, p.144) suggests that, 'where power is the capacity to achieve outcomes, agency is the capability to use power through access to resources/capabilities to achieve intended outcomes'.

According to Giddens's conceptualisation of agents, as being embodied and acting within the confines of structure, it is evident that behaviour and action may not always be a result of free will and rational choice. Agency, like structure, is an evolving entity and a property that may be in a state of flux or change. Drawing on the ideas of Foucault, power is never fixed but 'best conceived of as a relationship, a mysterious force between individuals, groups and institutions...the multifarious submissions and resistances of individuals in their engagement with social and institutional life' (Elliott, 2009, p.74). Foucault believed that structures, or systems of power, are paramount in controlling the amount of power bestowed onto individuals i.e. whether individuals become either the subjects or objects of that power. These ideas raise questions on whether agents become subject to structure, or if and how structure can be altered or changed through the mobilisation of agency.

One of the most important developments in considering agency is how it has become time and context dependant. Agency is not a uniform concept: it is diverse and changing (Sewell, 1992). While actors have a 'capacity for agency', this capacity is 'formed by a specific range of cultural schemas and resources available in a person's particular social milieu' (Sewell, 1992, p.20). Structuration needs to emphasise:

> 'the agency of social actors to innovate and interpret the rules of the game: migrants activities are neither simply the products of the *power to* and *power over* as these actors define and pursue their purposes, playing with or against different structures' (Morawska, 2001, p.54).

Noting the fluidity of agency, Emirbayer and Mische (1998, p.962) reconceptualise agency as 'a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past, but also orientated toward the future and toward the present'. They claim that agency has different dimensions that need to be given due attention. Agency is often caught up in structure and the extent to which agents are able to shape social action is not fully understood. As individuals are situated in social positions differentiated by variables such as social class, ethnicity or education; this 'gives people knowledge of different schemas and access to different kinds and amounts of resources and hence different possibilities for transformative action' (Sewell, 1992, p.21). Rules and resources, that constitute structures, become the medium through which agency (power) is acquired and exercised, but as pointed out by both Sewell and Giddens, they are 'laden with differences in power' (Sewell, 1992, p.21) and 'form the media of the expandable (and retractable) character of power in different types of society' (Giddens, 1984, p.258).

Social theory therefore attempts to understand how these two elements interact and intertwine. O'Reilly (2012, p.17) reminds us that 'neither agent nor structure is determining in the final instance; structures are both the limits to and outcomes of agency'. The nature of this reciprocal relationship remains the subject of debate, but these conceptualisations highlight key features of structure and agency: their fluidity; complex dynamics; power differentials; and social context as key points for consideration.

Critiques and Criticisms

Structuration theory has been widely critiqued (Thompson, 1989; Sewell, 1992; Mouzelis, 1995; Archer, 2004; Stones, 2005). Understanding the central criticisms is useful for helping to develop and refine the concept as a valid theoretical perspective. The first criticism is that Giddens's theory is deemed as failing to go beyond an abstract and highly ontological enterprise, therefore lacking empirical grounding and direction (Gregson, 1989). Giddens himself has not empirically applied his ideas. Whilst the openness and lack of methodological clarity of his framework may be true, revisionists have championed this as the beauty of his ideas (Stones, 2005). They claim that a grand theory was not Giddens's intention and indeed, they would argue against studying social processes of such complexity using a strict and inflexible framework.

More significant contestations within structuration theory persist: the nature of structures and agents; and the relationships between them. This dissatisfaction has been expressed by Thompson (1989) in that Giddens's conception of structures as 'rules and resources' do not capture the complexity and multiplicity of structure. Thompson criticises Giddens for not being more explicit through empirical examples as to what constitutes rules and resources. Thompson believes that all forms of social structure cannot be reduced to either rules or resources, and furthermore, even the way in which rules are understood and applied 'are differentiated according to class, sex, religion and so on' (Thompson, 1989). Although Thompson claims that structures need to become more conventional, distancing himself from Giddens's use of 'rules and resources', his efforts in developing this endeavour have been met with disagreement. Subsequent scholars have counteracted these claims by noting the inherent limits in the ontology of structure (Stones, 2005). The crux of the argument is summarised by Sewell (1992), in that Giddens's vision of structures is too rigid and demands a greater interpretive and flexible framework to be advanced.

Giddens views the relationship between structure and agency as almost equal forces, mutually constituting each other. Archer (2004) does not deny this interdependent relationship, but argues that they need to be analysed separately in order to understand how social action and practices evolve. She criticises Giddens as conflating both elements to the extent that they are too intertwined, with a degree of distancing necessary to study the interaction of the concepts more fully. Preferring a 'dualism' between structure and agency rather than Giddens's 'duality', Archer's approach advocates that structure and agency need to be separated for stronger analytical capacity to be achieved. She believes that these conditions and actions can be unpicked to investigate the causal dynamics. Mouzelis (1995) has also raised this dilemma by questioning whether there is 'inseparability' between structure and agency and whether boundaries can be drawn around each concept. Archer, in summing up what she believes to be an unnecessary debate, conceptualises the relationship between rules and resources as 'a matter of contingency not necessity' (Archer, 1995, p.111). Despite these various criticisms, Giddens's theory of structuration is still widely used in social research, with migration scholars advocating for its application to modern migration processes (Morawska, 2009; O'Reilly, 2012).

3.4 Theorisation in Migration: Developments and the introduction of structuration

This section will briefly revisit the key theoretical perspectives that have preoccupied migration scholars, as discussed more fully in Chapter 2. It will provide an overview of how these theories have led to the emergence of a structuration perspective in migration studies. By critically examining previous migration research that has utilised a structure-agency approach, justification will be provided for the use of structuration theory as the framework for this investigation. This section concludes by outlining the unique contribution that a structure-agency framework will bring to the thesis.

Theoretical Perspectives in Migration

As already noted, theorisation in migration studies has been a continuous enterprise, subject to considerable debate and extensive review (Massey et al, 1998; Brettell and Hollifield, 2000). Theories have emerged across many disciplines, spanning objectivist (structural) and subjectivist (agential) paradigms and contributing to both macro and micro level perspectives. These theories have developed into three broad strands in attempting to explain migration phenomena namely; economic approaches, world systems theories, and migration systems and network theory explanations (O'Reilly, 2012). A summary of these approaches demonstrates how the structure-agency framework has evolved within migration research.

Micro economic theories in migration regard individuals as rational actors exercising free will as they make decisions. With little consideration to the role of the state or to historical and structural forces, agents respond to economic conditions, making rational choices in order to realise and fulfil opportunities. At the opposite end of the spectrum, world systems theories e.g. neoliberalism/capitalism ascribe historical and structural forces as conditioning the actions of individuals, hence their agency is limited. Both of these approaches are criticised for being overly deterministic and failing to recognise greater dynamics between each other and so the migration systems and networks paradigm emerged. The use of systems and networks aimed to understand how migration processes evolve by examining 'meso structures' (Castles and Miller, 2003), the individuals, groups and intermediary agents and organisations involved in the migration process. In attempting to address the limitations of previous approaches, systems and networks have established a 'meso level' or 'middle range' theory of migration (Faist, 2000). But as explained by O'Reilly

(2012, p.48) 'it does not fully theorise the interrelationship of structures and agency and spends little or no time thinking through how structures become embodied in practice'.

Numerous scholars have advanced migration theories using this meso-level perspective (Portes, 2010; Bakewell, 2010; Faist, 2000). Castles goes even further as he criticises previous studies as a 'failure to understand the historical character, false assumptions of one-way causality, and an inability to understand the overall dynamics of migratory processes and their embeddedness in processes of societal change' (Castles, 2010, p. 1570). He stipulates that although 'a general theory of migration is neither possible nor desirable' (Castles, 2010), studying migration phenomena does demand a framework that adequately captures the complexity and fluidity of modern migration processes. Given the characteristics and nature of contemporary migration and the shortcomings of previous theoretical perspectives, it is this complexity that demands a multi-layered analysis. Somewhat responding to this O'Reilly (2012, p.104) posits that we need to examine both macro structural layers and the practices and experiences of daily life, but more importantly we need to look at the space in between these two strands to examine and understand 'the meso level of daily practice'.

Hitherto, migration studies have been described as becoming 'compartmentalised with little analytical (and methodological) collaboration across boundaries' (Castles, 2010, p.1569). In some instances particular theoretical angles such as economic theories may have been helpful in examining, for example, the reasons behind international migration. Given the scale, nature and complexity of modern migration, there is a need for new approaches that take account of the multi-faceted nature of the process and in particular, that incorporate structure and agency as analytical tools rather than assigning them as mere labels. The structure-agency dualism constitutes a relatively new framework for migration theory, with scholars emphasising its value and encouraging its application to migration phenomenon (Goss and Lindquist, 1995; Halfacree, 1995; Wolfel, 2005; Morawska, 2001, 2009; Bakewell, 2010; O'Reilly, 2012; Lacroix, 2013; Vlase and Voicu, 2013).

However, there are few empirical studies that have taken on the challenge of developing and applying this framework in migration research. Theoretical analyses have addressed the apparent weaknesses and quarrels within structuration theory (Bakewell, 2010; Wolfel, 2005); while few studies have used a framework based on structuration theory to

empirically examine the dynamics of various aspects of the migratory process (Morawska, 2009; O'Reilly, 2012). Goss and Lindquist (1995) argue that structuration theory is the 'means to transcend the macro-micro dichotomy', as earlier studies have produced 'an unproductive polarisation of the literature, sustaining an artificial separation between macro and micro scales of analysis' (Goss and Lindquist, 1995, p.331). As supported by O'Reilly (2012) studies need to examine the relationship and interaction between structure and agency rather than just acknowledging their existence and/or separating them into definable categories of analysis.

It is of little surprise that considerable controversy remains on how to incorporate structuration theory into migration research. Bakewell (2010, p.1693) argues that studies tend to 'skirt around' the concepts of structure and agency, failing to 'articulate the links' and fully conceptualise the relationship between the two. He believes that the 'individual and institutional—must be bracketed together' (p.1700). Bakewell advocates for the adoption of a critical realist approach and for multi-method and/or mixed-method research. At the very least he highlights the utility in engaging more fully with a structure-agency perspective in migration theory. It is apparent that structuration has a lot to offer the field of migration studies. To date it has been used to study different aspects of migration including the triggers of migration movements; the establishment and perpetuation of migration systems; processes related to settlement such as assimilation and integration; the impacts on sender and receiver societies; and the transnational relations and linkages established between origins and destinations (Goss and Lindquist, 1995; Morawska, 2001, 2009; Brown, 2002; O'Reilly, 2012; Lacroix, 2013; Vlase and Voicu, 2013).

Structure-Agency Studies of Migration

Stones's (2005) work is particularly relevant to this study. Building on Giddens's theory, he developed the quadripartite cycle to help operationalise what he has termed 'strong structuration theory'. His aim was to reformulate structuration to a more empirical level, something that has subsequently been used in migration by O'Reilly (2012). The four aspects of the model are: external structures, internal structures of the agent, practices and outcomes; to help examine the connections between structure and agency. These key elements are outlined in Figure 3.1.

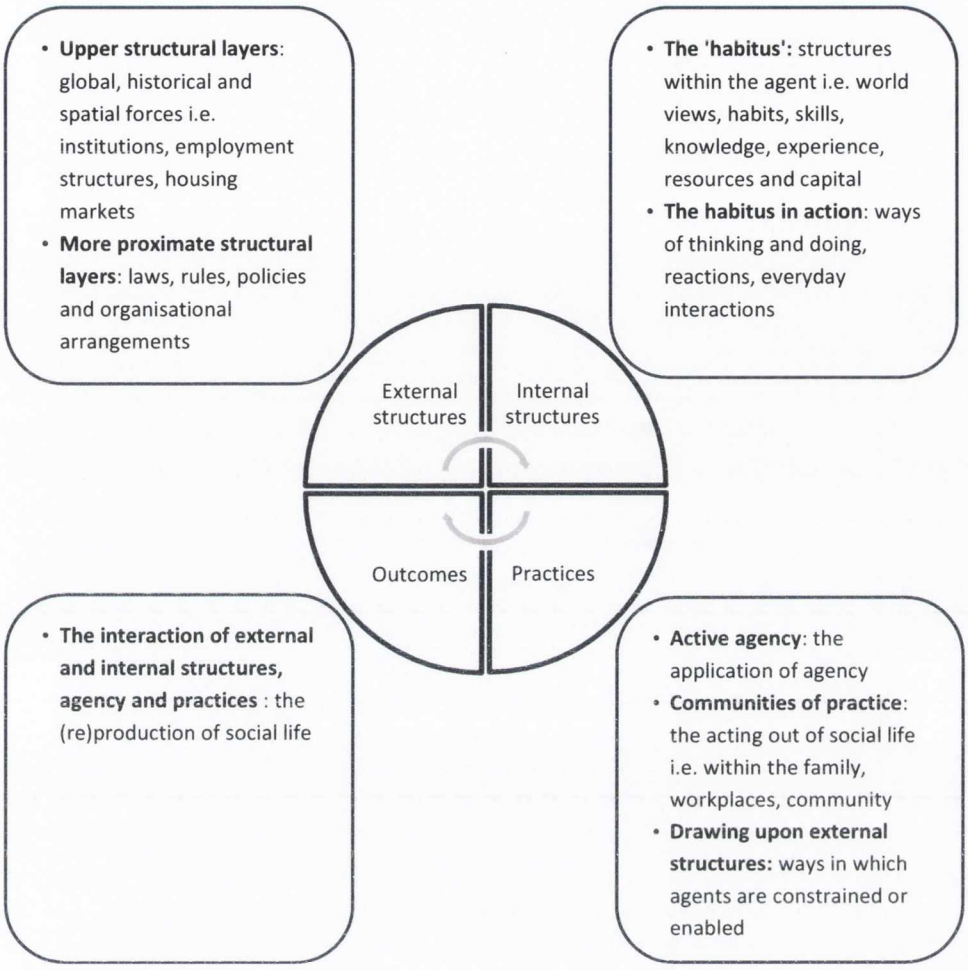

Figure 3.1 The quadripartite cycle of structuration

(Based on versions produced by Stones, 2005 and O'Reilly, 2012)

This framework helps illustrate how new directions in migration research are trying to bridge structure and agency; cutting across the previously detached categories of analysis such as macro, meso and micro. As summarised by O'Reilly (2012, p.153) 'understanding migration processes thus involves moving out from the individual to the wider and interconnected sets of circumstances within which an individual agent is located'. It is the space between structure and agency that acts as a filtering and mediating influence on producing the outcomes of social action. O'Reilly (2012, p.148) has used the framework to illustrate how social processes take place 'through an ongoing cycle constituted by the interaction of external structures, internalised structures in agents, practices (or actions), and outcomes (with intended or unintended consequences)'. Rather than adopting a literal interpretation of this framework, it will be used as a guide to formulate the conceptual framework for this thesis. First, some examples will be provided to illustrate its current use.

More substantial structuration approaches have been advanced by Morawska (2001 and 2009) in examining Jewish and Polish settlement processes in North America; by O'Reilly (2012) in studying British lifestyle migration to Spain, Mexican labour migration to the United States and forced migration to the United Kingdom; and most recently by Lacroix (2013) in the emerging paradigm of transnationalism. Transnationalism, a phenomenon whereby migrants become simultaneously embedded in both their origin and new destination country, demonstrates how migrants can become inserted in multiple social spaces, thus requiring consideration to the structure-agency dynamics that facilitate this process.

Studies such as those by Morawska (2001 and 2009) support migration being conceptualised as a structuration process, in that it is particularly useful for interpreting the actions of individuals who move to different environments and confront new circumstances. For example, in O'Reilly's study of British lifestyle migration to Spain, external structures enabling migration have been attributed to policies that allow freedom of movement, technological innovation, increased connectivity and the proliferation of mass tourism. Economics was deemed a strong structural factor, with a coincidence of UK economic recovery during the 1980s, wealth creation among the middle classes, and an attractive property market in Spain. Although these structures may appear external to agents, how migrants have internalised them and shaped the process of migration and settlement in Spain is much more complex. O'Reilly identified how the process of migration itself has created new structural layers that affect how subsequent migrants make decisions, understand rules and draw on resources, and how the Spanish government has responded to the perception that lifestyle migrants are relatively wealthy, independent and therefore require little assistance. With the motivations behind migration understood as retirement and lifestyle, hence with little need for employment, this has raised many questions on if and how British migrants are integrating into Spanish society.

O'Reilly, drawing on the work of Canales (2003) and Portes and Rumbaut (2006), has also used this framework to analyse Mexican migration to the US. Attributing the economic and political relationships between these two countries as the key external structures in influencing the movement and settlement processes of Mexican labour migrants, it is through this study that O'Reilly identified the key gaps in fully conceptualising migration through structuration. In order to achieve this, attention needs to be paid to questions such as: who enacts structural constraints and opportunities; how Mexican migrants find

employment and under what conditions; what is their relationship with government and institutions; and if and how do Mexicans acquire and utilise power – acting on opportunities or avoiding constraints (O'Reilly, 2012).

Vlase and Voicu (2013) examined Romanian Roma migration to Western Europe, claiming that often little attention is paid to migrant agency. Roma migrants are traditionally perceived as passive agents, who lack power and control in making decisions when confronting new circumstances and adapting to new environments. Their study demonstrates how Roma migrants are able to make sense of their situations, successfully mobilise resources and negotiate structural hurdles in order to improve life prospects.

While structuration has been introduced to migration research, with the most developed attempts coming from Morawska (2001 and 2009) and O'Reilly (2012), the extent to which it has been empirically applied remains limited and open to further investigation. Studies have certainly addressed and taken on earlier theoretical challenges. But to an extent these studies offer a fairly rudimentary application by 'skimming the surface' in investigating structure-agency dynamics. There is a tendency to reiterate and describe the broad structural conditions and changes that have led to migration i.e. such as push and pull factors, in what O'Reilly (2012) describes as brush stroke studies that make broad sweeping generalisations. Studies need to examine what happens 'underneath', how migrants make sense of, interpret and internalise structures, and how their agency leads to the (re)framing of new structural arrangements. Although attempts have been made, it is not unreasonable to suggest that further advancement is required in order to demonstrate if structuration can be used as a valid theoretical framework. As stated by Bakewell (2010, p.1690) 'the extent to which agency or structure prevails remains a question of crucial importance in the analysis of migration processes'.

3.5 A Theoretical Framework for Contemporary Migration

This section will outline in more detail the conceptual framework that will define and shape this study. Chapter 2 summarised the many theoretical and conceptual ideas that proliferate the migration literature. It identified research gaps that emphasise the need to adopt new theoretical frameworks that examine migration as a multi-layered process. This chapter has established structure and agency as important components of that process, but most significant is the examination of the dynamics between these two analytical lenses. Migration cannot be understood or conceptualised through macro scale forces or micro

scale activities. The interrelationship and interdependency between these two elements is not fully understood in migration studies and it is this gap that is the subject of scrutiny within this research.

The Conceptual Framework

The framework draws on Giddens's theory of structuration and the versions produced by both Stones (2005) and O'Reilly (2012). Structure and agency are now understood as reciprocal and causal entities and will be used to examine how the state and civil society respond to and deal with modern migration. This also illuminates the ways in which migrants interact with the structural spaces in which they are situated. More specifically the study will examine how the arrangement, provision and delivery of global, state and local civil society structures, together with the agential capacity of migrants, fuse together in migration processes. This includes large-scale forces such as the EU, structures within the nation state, and the micro experiences and behaviours of migrants. The way in which migrants articulate and negotiate a new destination is not fully understood. How they mobilise their agency, whether structures enable or constrain their actions, and whether they become subject to, have the power to resist, or capacity to change structures is under examined in research. As illustrated by Stones, this can be viewed as a dynamic process, constituted by different elements and through the interaction of many forces, actors and practices. These are brought together in Figure 3.2 below that presents the conceptual framework.

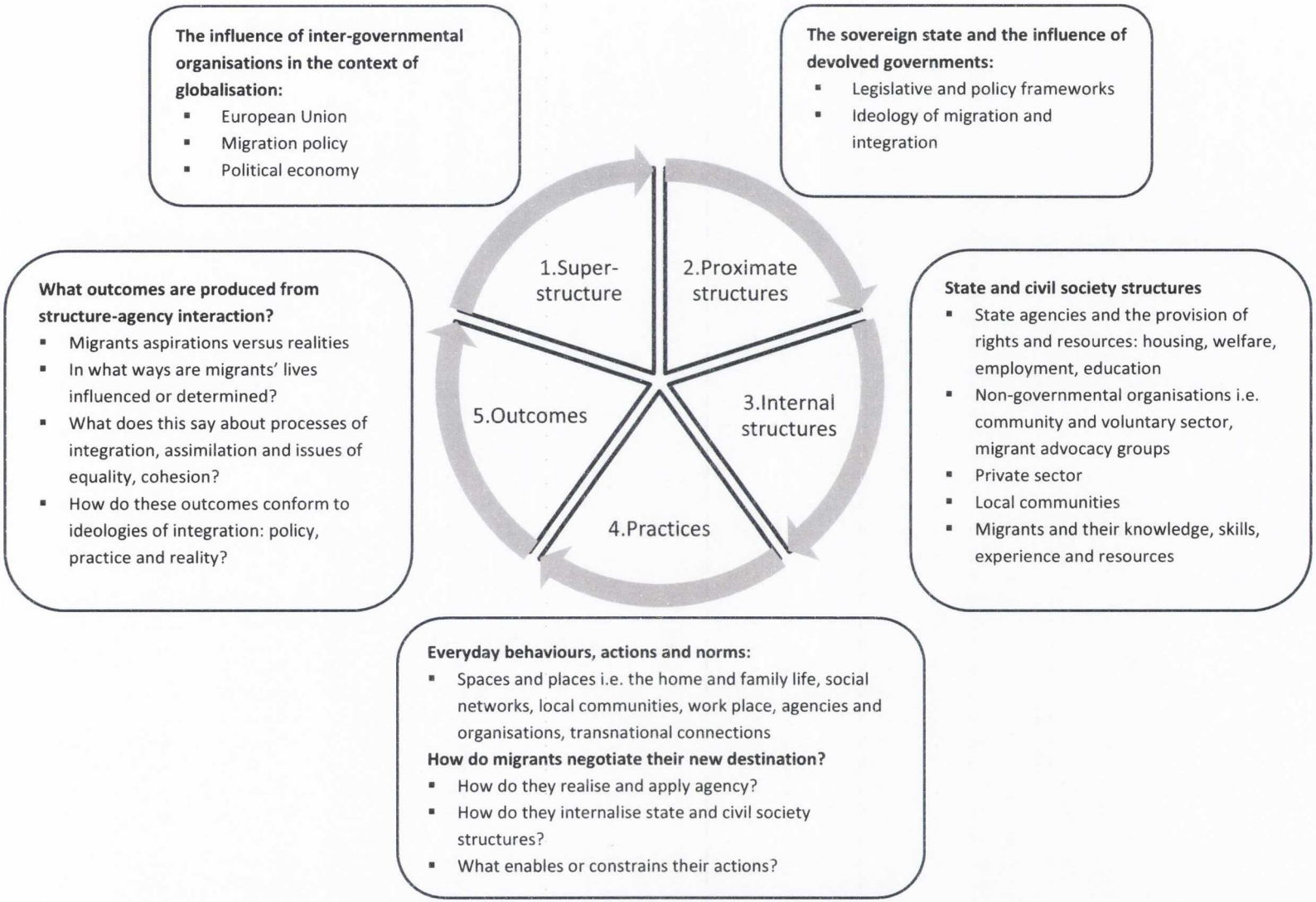

Figure 3.2 A framework for theorising contemporary migration

It should be stressed that the categories outlined are not definitive; they may overlap and they may be multi-directional. Indeed it illustrates the ongoing difficulty in conceptualising structures and agents as the boundary between these remains blurred. For example, just as migration policy may grant agency through increased mobility to EU citizens, whether migrants can apply agency in their new destination is questionable. The operation of migrant advocacy organisations as structural or agential entities, or moreover as mediators between migrants and structural spaces, is also debatable. Migrants may be viewed as agents, but when they mobilise their agency through resources such as networks, they effectively create structures that help them to navigate institutional structures such as the state more efficiently. This demonstrates that they may have the potential to manage their own structure-agency dynamics to avail of opportunities and fulfil their aspirations. These examples are illustrative of the 'multiplicity' of structure and the complexity of migrant agency, and so this research expands on Stones's version to help operationalise this framework in the context of migration.

The first two parts of this framework considers (1) the 'super-structure' and (2) more 'proximate structures'. While Stones termed these as external forces that are detached from agents and provide the wider conditions of action, these structures have been distinguished into two categories. This is reflective of new multi-level governance frameworks within which modern migration occurs. Super-structure refers to wider processes of globalisation and the functioning of bodies such as the EU, whereas more proximate structures refer to the nation state and the devolved government of Northern Ireland. In Giddensian terms these types of structure are conceptualised as rules: formal laws manifested through legislative and policy frameworks; and normative behaviours that are protracted as 'social' or 'unwritten' rules. Rules may therefore endorse formal procedures or portray certain modes of behaviour, but more significantly, how rules are communicated and interpreted is thought to have a more powerful influence on how individuals construe rules.

'Internal structures' (3) are conceived by Stones as the structures embedded within agents such as their skills, knowledge and resources. They have been interpreted slightly differently in this study. Between more observable external structures at a global and nation state level, this study argues for greater conceptualisation of the spaces within and between the state and civil society. There are more localised structures that also shape the decisions, behaviours and experiences of migrants. This is what Giddens terms allocative

and authoritative resources: allocative referring to access to material resources such as housing, employment, welfare and education; and authoritative relating to the administration and distribution of power; in how life chances are mediated and opportunities organised. Internal structures include a wide range of actors in society that can be influential in migration processes including: state agencies, community and voluntary organisations, the private sector and local communities. Migrants and their knowledge, skills and experiences also constitute internal structures, as they too become part of civil society in their new destination.

Practices (4) are considered the everyday behaviours, actions and norms enacted in society. As illustrated in the diagram, space and place becomes important in where and how decisions are carried out: at home and within families, in the workplace or local community, and even across transnational linkages that migrants increasingly forge. Practices include not only the micro activities of migrants, but how the arrangement, delivery and functioning of institutional and civil society structures merge to influence actions; affording opportunities or posing constraints to migrants' integration.

Outcomes (5) relate to the implications of the interaction between structure and agency. Broadly, in relation to the migration literature, this may question notions of assimilation, integration and transnationalism. But more pertinent questions remain; what agency and power do migrants have to be able to fulfil migration aspirations and how do existing structures and practices become reinforced, modified or resisted in new migration destinations. In presenting this diagram it is important to emphasise that the various segments of this framework are not as neatly bounded as this model might suggest, nor does it operate in a cyclical fashion as illustrated. Rather the framework aims to be representative of the different components of modern migration processes.

3.6 Summary

This chapter examined key debates in social theory, evaluated theoretical perspectives in migration research, and provided a conceptual framework based on structuration theory to examine modern migration. The underlying premise is that social processes can no longer be understood simply through macro or micro lenses. The complex and multifaceted nature of contemporary migration requires a framework that captures the dynamic interplay between both structure and agency forces. Whilst structure may be viewed as fixed and controlling the actions of agents, the power of individuals to become subject to or resist

such structures is significant. The framework aims to examine the theoretical propositions behind the concepts that dominate the migration literature as discussed in Chapter 2. The next chapter will present the methodological context of the research; how the conceptual framework will be implemented and the aim and objectives of the research addressed.

CHAPTER 4

Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Chapters 1 and 2 outlined key arguments and reviewed important theoretical debates central to this thesis. Chapter 3 developed a conceptual framework based on structuration theory that will be used to frame, analyse and interpret the empirical work of the study. These chapters identified the complex and multidimensional nature of contemporary migration phenomena, which also raise important methodological questions for migration research. This chapter presents a research approach, design and methods suitable for answering the research aim and objectives. It will first consider the key philosophical traditions of knowledge production within the social sciences, before reviewing various methodological approaches that have typified migration research. The focus of the chapter will then shift to the primarily qualitative strategy adopted in this study. It will examine the design of the research, the use of the case study approach and the accompanied research methods. The chapter will also consider important methodological issues that are integral to the research process and conclude with a strategy for data analysis and interpretation.

4.2 Social Science and the Traditions of Knowledge Production

The terms 'methodology' and 'method' can be referred to as the 'how' of social research (Marshall and Rossman, 2011). Essentially this is about acquiring knowledge, but how we acquire knowledge is strongly influenced by our ontological beliefs and our epistemological positions on how the social world exists. Ontology concerned with 'the nature of reality', and epistemology concerned with 'the nature of knowledge production', are important philosophical principles that underpin and guide our research practices (King and Horrocks, 2010). Two of the most frequently citied paradigms in the social sciences are the 'positivist' and the 'interpretivist' paradigms (Hennink et al., 2011). Positivism is rooted in the traditions of the natural sciences and is concerned with a reality that is factual, observable and measurable. It is commonly contrasted with interpretivism which regards realities as 'multiple' and socially constructed through the diverse meanings people attach to life experiences (Bryman, 2008). Accordingly, quantitative research is routinely paired with positivism and objectivity, and qualitative research with interpretivism and subjectivity.

Quantitative and qualitative methodologies are therefore often framed as competing approaches, forcing researchers to choose a particular tradition (King and Horrocks, 2010). Although the underlying assumptions of each philosophical tradition are mirrored in the key premises of quantitative and qualitative strategies, the divisions between these paradigms are not entirely distinct or incompatible, with for example questions arising on the extent to which research can ever be fully 'objective' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Hennink et al., 2011). This is an ongoing dispute in the social sciences (Creswell, 2011). However, the perceived incongruity of these approaches has lessened in recent years with less pressure on researchers to select a specific approach; rather many tend to find ways of accommodating both traditions (Hammersley, 1996; Creswell, 2011).

These philosophical principles are important as our beliefs shape our methodological approach and subsequently the methods or 'tools' that we employ to answer research questions (Castles, 2012). The ontological and epistemological positions in this research do not fit neatly into a precise paradigmatic approach. Although swayed towards an ontology that has 'multiple realities' and an epistemology that the social world is open to subjective understanding, meaning and interpretation, like a lot of research in the social sciences, this research does not dismiss some of the principles of positivism and the possibility of objectivity. Ontological positions are often described as 'realist' or 'relativist'; either that the social world is observable and works independently from human action, or that the world is much more diverse, complex and unpredictable and open to multiple explanations and interpretations. However, as claimed by King and Horrocks (2010) the boundaries between these distinctions are not clear cut and are often blurred. For example, qualitative researchers unsatisfied with a purely realist ontology would therefore subscribe to a more critical realist or relativist stance, whereby social action can be independent, but also influenced in complex ways by underlying structural conditions (King and Horrocks, 2010).

The nature of migration research, as demonstrated through the various theoretical approaches in Chapters 2 and 3, can be viewed as both realist and more relativist. Ontological and epistemological dimensions in migration research are still subject to debate (Iosifides, 2011a and 2012). With an early predominance of positivist perspectives, Iosifides describes the limits of empiricism in explaining migration phenomena as lacking 'the ability to account for ontological depth and to move beyond appearances, empirically observable, discrete events and behaviours and a regularity conception of social causality'(2012, p.33). Furthermore, empiricism presents:

> "Distorted and biased versions of social reality as value-neutral, objective and scientific. They usually take certain background assumptions for granted, such as, for example, the co-identity of the 'national' and the 'social' and the alleged 'causal' relationships between external, discrete, atomised events and behaviours, resulting in legitimisation of existing social arrangements of domination and unequal power relations at different levels and scales." (Iosifides, 2012, p.34)

This argument coincides with the debate on both methodological individualism and methodological nationalism in migration studies, whereby individuals acting within the confines of the nation-state society were traditionally regarded as the unitary backdrop to studying processes such as migration (see Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002). Contemporary migration challenges this notion theoretically and methodologically, given the fluidity of migrants in the 21st Century and also their propensity to live transnationally.

Alternatively, Iosifides (2012) questions a purely relativist stance. He associates qualitative and interpretive methods in migration as potentially problematic when conceptualising experiences, behaviours and subjectivities; questioning their ability to fully explain and understand the social world. With the various criticisms waged at traditional approaches to migration research and their apparent inability to scrutinise modern migratory processes, this research will adopt a critical realist position. The critical realist paradigm seeks to glean interpretive meanings and understanding, but also gives attention to the generative casual mechanisms that produce social reality. As structure-agency dynamics are perceived as having a multi-faceted, complex and under-examined relationship in the study of migration phenomena (Iosifides, 2011a, 2011b), critical realism is viewed as having the potential to bridge structure and agency as important conceptual components in migration research (Archer, 1995; Bakewell, 2010; Iosifides, 2011a and 2012). A critical realist perspective also helps overcome the traditional divide between quantitative and qualitative research, disassociating with strict positivist and interpretivist paradigms.

4.3 Methodologies in Migration Research

It is acknowledged that migration research is not confined to a single discipline. Hence it does not rest on particular ontological or epistemological beliefs, or advocate precise methodological strategies or practices. Evidently, methodologies that have developed in economics, sociology and geography have built on their philosophical positions and so they espouse contrasting approaches to investigating migration and in explaining social action

(Castles, 2012). The greatest division has been carved between economists with largely quantifiable and theoretically rigorous accounts based on principles of rationality, and sociologists and their concerns with capturing the complexity of social action (Boswell, 2008). The theoretical fragmentation apparent in migration studies is thought to have produced a methodological quandary in developing a framework that is empirically robust (Bakewell, 2010).

Evidently, methods in migration research have moved between empiricist, interpretivist and relativist paradigms. It is noted that earlier research has been dominated by positivist-empiricist approaches using tools such as statistical modelling and survey methods, whereas more recent research has shifted towards qualitative strategies including biography, interview and observation methods (Iosifides, 2011a). Increasingly, research has turned to mixing both quantitative and qualitative approaches to overcome the methodological limitations of certain disciplines and to cross-check and enrich the picture of social reality, described as 'complementary articulation' by Wallerstein and Smelser (1969). Findlay and Li (1999, p.50) also encourage researchers to adopt 'flexible research practice in order to capture the multiplicities of meaning associated with migration and place'.

These methodological conundrums are deeply intertwined with debates on theory generation in migration research. The multitude of theories, ranging from macro to micro perspectives, continues to question the possibility or desirability of a single grand migration theory (Castles, 2010). Although migration scholars widely dismiss this proposition, finding a methodology that acknowledges the complexity of migration and the challenges of theory is equally difficult. As Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrate, and argued by Castles (2010), the spatial and temporal dynamics of migration cannot be fully captured in a single migration theory. Castles proposes the development of middle range theories and methodologies that 'reflect the complexity, diversity and contextuality of migratory processes' (2010, p.1582). With continued support to theoretically integrate structure and agency as conceptual components in studying migration, this endeavour demands a methodological framework that adequately captures the nature and dynamics of these elements.

Migration research and its increasingly complex and multi-dimensional nature has since entered a paradigm that calls for new epistemological frameworks (Iosifides, 2011a). This is identified in Chapters 2 and 3 whereby migration research is perceived as being at a critical

juncture both theoretically and empirically. Consequentially, there are calls for the use of mixed methods and a methodology that adequately accounts for the linkages between structural and agential factors (Findlay and Li, 1999; Bakewell, 2010; Iosifides, 2011a, 2011b). Recent endeavours advocate for a critical realist position to methodological inquiry, drawing upon both positivist and relativist epistemological ideas (Bakewell, 2010; Iosifides, 2011a). Iosifides, concerned with methods in migration studies, challenges the epistemological assumption that quantitative and qualitative research paradigms are opposing and incompatible, in an attempt to reconcile the false dichotomy that has been historically re-produced between both research traditions. Borrowing from positivist ideas, Iosifides places concepts of emergence and causality as the central focus of social inquiry. Believing that social reality is 'ontologically deep', it can only be uncovered by delving into the 'structures, mechanisms, powers and relations' that produce that reality. In sum, 'realist qualitative research is the art of connecting rather than conflating' (Iosifides, 2011b, p.12). This approach calls for 'methodological dualism'; finding a way of bringing together the analytical concepts of structure and agency (Goss and Lindquist, 1995; Morawska, 2001; Bakewell, 2010). This research was conducted in a manner that was mindful of these principles.

4.4 The Research Strategy

The philosophical debates and methodological approaches discussed in the previous sections were used to shape the research strategy. As the study sought to answer 'how' and 'why' questions, a primarily qualitative approach was considered both appropriate and necessary to answer the research aim and objectives. However, quantitative data was also necessary to probe the research questions. As described by Denzin and Lincoln (2011, p.6) 'qualitative research is a set of complex interpretive practices'. Derived from the interpretive paradigm, qualitative methods provide intensive and detailed analysis. They allow us to study complex issues, understand processes and interactions, uncover meanings, examine behaviour and actions, and give voice to our research participants (Hennink et al., 2011). The concept of 'understanding' is central to the qualitative paradigm. Weber calls this 'Verstehen' which means giving voice to the participant. While 'understanding' refers to the researchers frame of interpretation, 'Verstehen' places emphasis the role of the participant, allowing them to use their own words to express the subjective meanings they attach to behaviours, events or objects (Hennink et al., 2011). A primarily qualitative strategy was chosen due to the limits of quantitative techniques in fully capturing social reality through process, meaning and action.

The tendency of social science to set up quantitative and qualitative approaches as being in competition with rather than complementary to each other is identified (Flick, 2007). This research does not disregard the explanatory power of quantitative elements as supplementary tools in research practice (Hammersley, 1996). Although a qualitative strategy was considered most appropriate, it was recognised that quantitative tools could enhance and contribute to explanations of structure-agency interactions. Some research methodologists would outright dismiss mixed research strategies, but the combining of quantitative and qualitative approaches has gained steady support in recent years (Hammersley, 1996; Bryman, 2008; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). Hammersley (1996) identifies three ways of linking quantitative and qualitative research; through triangulation, facilitation, or a combination of both. Triangulation refers to the mutual accommodation of both strategies, whereas facilitation acts as a supplementary method. The role of quantitative data in this research was facilitative in offering an additional and complementary tool to the qualitative methods.

4.5 Research Design

This section develops the design of the research. It describes and justifies the use of a case study approach as the method of inquiry, before elaborating on the criteria used in case study selection.

The Case Study Approach

Case studies are most suitable when seeking to answer 'how' and 'why' questions (Yin, 2009). They allow contemporary events to be studied 'in context' and offer an in-depth description and understanding of complex social phenomena. The case study in its most basic sense is considered as 'detailed and intensive analysis' (Bryman, 2008, p.52). Yin's (2009, p.18) definition is particularly useful, describing the case study as 'an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident'. Case studies are aimed at drawing rich pictures of analysis, taken from many angles and perspectives, and providing unique insights into the questions being studied. Case studies provide researchers with a degree of flexibility, to refine and make changes to their research design in order to enhance validity. Furthermore, Flyvbjerg (2011) stresses that case studies should not be associated strictly with qualitative methods. This approach

allows for the use of multiple research methods with Flick (2002) arguing that qualitative research is inherently multi-method.

The case study approach has many advantages, yet it is often associated with several common problems linked to generalisability, bias, rigour and external validity (Bryman, 2008; Yin, 2009; Flyvbjerg, 2011). These presumptions however are often fiercely counteracted by case study researchers as contradictory to the art of the craft (Stake, 1995). Case studies are frequently cited as having two main weaknesses; generalisability and validity. Yin (2009, p.15) however distinguishes case studies as aiming to provide 'analytic generalisation', in that they can expand and generalise theories and 'not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalisation)'. Research validity is concerned with how rigorous and reliable case studies are, with external validity deemed most problematic for case study research. The aim of this investigation was not to produce large scale generalisations, but to glean a rich and intensive understanding of migration phenomena using the analytical concepts of structure and agency. Internal validity was achieved through the design of a robust methodological framework; using multiple methods and saturating case study networks. External validity, the degree to which a study can be replicated and generalised to larger populations, is not entirely possible in case study research. However, this was not the aim of the research or the purpose of employing case studies. Instead this thesis sought to understand complex and fluid migration processes using an innovative methodological approach.

Flyvbjerg (2011) strongly refutes what he describes as common misunderstandings of case study research. In a brief summary, Flyvbjerg argues that case knowledge is just as valuable as predictive theories and universals; generalisations can be made on individual cases, as all knowledge matters whether or not it can be formally generalised; case studies are rigorous in their own right and contain no more bias towards verification than other methods; and finally, that summarising theoretical propositions from case studies is difficult but reflects the reality of the subject being studied. Furthermore, Denzin and Lincoln (2011) contend that all research fundamentally incorporates a degree of subjectivity, not just case studies, or indeed qualitative methods.

A case study approach was appropriate as the research involved the study of events, behaviours, relations and processes (Yin, 2009). Migration is indeed a contemporary phenomenon, and as revealed in Chapters 2 and 3, is a process that has become

increasingly complex and multi-faceted. Theoretically and methodologically, migration research demands a framework that acknowledges and takes into account this complexity. While there is no exact schema for the case study method, proponents of case study research frequently refer to key design criteria needed to support this approach. As a type of research design it can be bound by many things such as a geographical location, an institution, a community, or an event as the unit of analysis (Bryman, 2008; Yin, 2009). As outlined by Thomas (2011) case studies need to focus on two key elements; the subject and the object (or analytical frame). In this study, a conceptual framework based on structuration theory was used to examine how migrants experience new destinations, together with how the state and civil society respond to and manage modern migration processes.

Case Study Selection

The research employed a multiple case design. As argued by Yin (2009) case studies do not always aim to be comparative, but increase robustness as having more than one case study improves theory building (Bryman, 2008). The core of the research was situated within two Northern Ireland case studies. However, recognising the internationalisation of migration research, especially in its current climate, the literature analysis in Chapter 2 raised interesting questions on how migration processes may be played out in various contexts and in other areas identified as 'new destinations'. This highlighted the potential of adding an international element to the thesis. Initially a comparable case study was considered. However, as the research progressed, the depth of examination and understanding posed by the research questions in Northern Ireland alone was considerable. Despite this, an international perspective was still considered a viable part of the thesis, especially given the wider scope and anticipated outcomes of the research. The Northern Ireland Rural Development Council (RDC) was a joint funder of this study, conducted alongside their project 'Building Relationships in Communities' (BRIC). It was expected that the research would make policy and practice contributions centred on the theme of migrants, housing and community relations in Northern Ireland. Further details on the background of this project are located in Appendix 1.

Making use of pre-established links with Cornell University and the Trans-Atlantic Rural Research Network (TARRN), a two week research trip to Ithaca, New York took place during October 2012. During this time the researcher shadowed practitioners involved in working with migrant farmworkers and conducted interviews with migrant related organisations in

Upstate New York[4]. This endeavour was opportunistic and exploratory, but did have the potential to offer unique insights or models of practice. The USA case study did not aim to be comparative, be of the same depth, or indeed a replication of the fieldwork conducted in the Northern Ireland case studies. Its purpose was to put into context the internationalisation of migration phenomena and explore how these processes are played out and managed in different contexts.

Given the nature of the research questions and the primarily qualitative and interpretive research strategy, it was considered both unrealistic and unnecessary to include the whole of Northern Ireland as a case study. The research was therefore based within two geographical case study areas aiming to gather depth rather than breadth of knowledge. Two case studies were chosen to manage both practicality and validity. For the purpose of ensuring participant anonymity, these two areas will be referred to as Case Study A (CSA) and Case Study B (CSB), with Table 4.1 providing a profile of each case study area.

Case study profiles		
	Case Study A	**Case Study B**
Location	A settlement within the Belfast Metropolitan Area	A rural provincial town
Main nationalities of EU migrants	Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian	Polish, Slovakian, Romanian

Table 4.1 Case study profiles

Disclosing the exact location of the case studies would have undermined participant anonymity in a number of ways, as individuals could have been identifiable through links made between age, nationality and employer. Reasons for making decisions on anonymity are discussed further in Section 4.8.

With the distribution of migrants across Northern Ireland displaying an uneven picture, ultimately it made practical sense to select areas that contained significant numbers of migrants. Prior to the Census 2011 methods of recording the numbers of migrants in Northern Ireland were ad hoc and piecemeal. It must be stressed that even recent Census

[4] A profile of the New York fieldwork location is located in Appendix 2.

records are not entirely accurate, especially when taking into account migrants who may not have completed the survey. The results of the Census 2011 were published in phases during 2013; hence they were not available when selecting case study areas. Instead proxies were employed to identify areas with significant numbers of migrants using; Health Card registrations, National Insurance Number applications, interpreter requests and also local knowledge. Throughout Northern Ireland concentrations of migrants vary from approximately 4000 in cities and towns, to several hundred in smaller towns and villages. However, even a large volume of migrants in a specific location does not necessarily result in access to that population. With this in mind, it was necessary to employ additional parameters to aid case study selection and these included; the presence of a migrant advocacy organisation, an employer with significant numbers of migrant employees, and personal or recommended research leads. The success of these various access methods are examined later in Section 4.7. Chapter 5 will also consider in more detail the distribution and characteristics of migrants within Northern Ireland.

4.6 Research Methods

This section details the methods employed in the research and how they contributed to answering the research aim and objectives. Adopting a primarily qualitative strategy with a smaller quantitative element, the research methods reflected this approach. The primary method of data collection involved semi-structured in-depth interviews with both migrants and members of state and civil society in Northern Ireland and Ithaca, Upstate New York. This method was supplemented with secondary data including; census and survey data, legislative and policy documents, and media and literature sources. In addition, a research journal was used to record events, thoughts and ideas to facilitate data analysis and interpretation and to practice reflexivity throughout the research process. These methods were informed by the methodological underpinnings of the research strategy; the social world is multiple, complex and open to interpretation, but the utility of objectivity should not be disregarded. This section addresses each method in turn.

Qualitative Interviews

Qualitative in-depth interviews allow us to gain rich and detailed insights into the lives of our research participants, by privileging access to people's experiences of the world (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009). These are referred to as the 'emic' perspectives, known as 'the insiders view', which is a key feature of qualitative research interviewing (Hennink et al., 2011, p.109). As described by Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006, p.128) in-depth interviews are part of 'a meaning-making partnership'; a setting in which the interviewer and interviewee co-create knowledge...and thereby co-construct reality (Hennink et al., 2011, p.109). Interviews are appropriate when knowledge is situational, contextual and interactional (Mason, 2002).

Qualitative in-depth interviews provide 'rich description' and can attribute meaning and understanding to the intricacies of the migration process (Iosifides, 2003). The purpose of interviews was to gain insight into both the personal and collective experiences of migrants. Interviews adopted a biographical and narrative approach (Findlay and Li, 1997; Apitzsch and Siouti, 2007) to help uncover migrants' experiences from their arrival in Northern Ireland, to their everyday activities and interactions, and their visions for the future. Given the characteristics and strengths of using interviews, it would not have been possible to gather the necessary information in any other way, such as using survey methods. The interview method offers a greater degree of flexibility in research practice. Identifying

issues in earlier interviews provided the capacity to refine questions, probe further and make inductive inferences in subsequent interviews. This contributed to greater depth and understanding and improves validity in the research process (Hennink et al., 2011).

A semi-structured interview guide was compiled to include a number of important topics to be discussed during the interviews. The interview questions with migrants centred on several themes listed below, with a sample of the types of questions asked provided in Appendix 3. Interviews with statutory agencies and community and voluntary organisations were diverse, but focused mainly on their role and responsibilities for managing migration processes (A list of interviewees is detailed in Section 4.7)

- Migrant profile and background
- Access to services, information and advice
- Language
- Housing
- Community and identity
- Social networks and relations
- Employment and education
- Transnational activities and connections

This technique was useful; however it quickly became evident that the complex nature of migrants' accounts did not always fit neatly into specific subject domains. This meant that Hennink et al.'s (2011) probing techniques were employed to assist qualitative interviewing. Although the questions were 'topical' to encourage interviewees to elicit key issues and experiences, the 'reflective' and 'expansive' probes were often employed to backtrack, seek clarification and expand upon particular issues and examples. Often the 'silent' probe provided interviewees with time to gather their thoughts and elaborate on their responses. The majority of interviews were conducted individually and were effective for gathering information from the respondents. There were two cases of group interviews; one with two participants and another with four participants. This was a matter of convenience for the interviewees, but also for reassurance amongst those with limited language skills. The researcher did not set out to conduct group interviews as the information sought was different to that yielded by a focus group. Focus groups are a means whereby 'collective sense is made, meanings negotiated and identities elaborated through the processes of social interaction between people' (Wilkinson, 1999, p.225).

Interviews are concerned with what individuals' think and say; whereas focus groups examine the reasons why individuals make certain claims and why they say what they do.

The number of interviews conducted was guided by the theoretical principle of saturation; the point at which no new data is being produced (Guest et al., 2006). Saturation was used as the purpose of the interviews was to seek variation, generate in-depth analysis and situate the context of experiences; rather than the representativeness of those experiences (Hennink et al., 2011). A study of data saturation in qualitative research by Guest et al. (2006) identified 12 interviews as an optimum number. However this was interpreted strictly as a guide. Further elaboration on participant selection, access and recruitment will be examined in Section 4.7.

Quantitative Secondary Data

Secondary data, 'best known as a methodology for doing research using pre-existing statistical data' (Heaton, 2012, p.1), is often under-used and under-valued in social research (Goodwin, 2012). This study employed several sources of quantitative data as a contextual and complementary tool to supplement the qualitative data. Since the onset of new migration to Northern Ireland from the early 2000s, monitoring the volume and characteristics of migrants was ad hoc, as identified earlier when selecting case study areas. Despite this, measures have provided relatively consistent estimates. Quantitative data sources on the EU migrant population include; housing statistics provided by the NIHE, interpreter requests made through Health Trusts, doctor registrations, and the number of children in Primary Schools with English as an additional language. The Census 2011 provides the most recent and accurate picture of new migrants in Northern Ireland. It provides a record of migrant volumes, but includes statistics on migrants' employment industry and occupation, qualifications, languages spoken and fluency, and housing tenure. This data was used to contextualise new migration to Northern Ireland in Chapter 5 and complement the qualitative data obtained through interviews in Chapters 6 and 7.

The conceptual framework in Chapter 3 identified local communities as an important component of integration processes. With this is mind, the study made use of the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILT, 2007-2012), which analyses public attitudes towards ethnic minority people in Northern Ireland. This data was used to present a time series of perspectives and opinions that the local population express towards ethnic communities. The data was presented using charts and tables to monitor trends, but as this data set

contains over 1000 responses, it highlighted the potential for further statistical analysis. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) is a multivariate statistical method of data analysis that aims to reduce the dimensionality of data sets that contain multiple variables and observations (Field, 2007). It allows patterns in data to be observed by revealing the internal structure of data to show how each of the variables are linked to each other. It analyses how survey participants respond to each question, grouping together participants who respond to questions in similar ways. For example, it would associate and pull together participants who might say that they are prejudiced towards ethnic communities, with those who also think that migrants take jobs from local people. In doing so, it groups together respondents who express particular opinions. PCA was used to examine 17 variables from the most recent 2012 NILT survey (1204 observations). The results of the NILT survey are presented in Chapter 5.

Research Journal and Reflexivity

Throughout the research process a journal was used to record key events, thoughts and ideas to help facilitate data analysis and interpretation. A fieldwork journal helped formulate new questions and explore ideas in subsequent interviews, take note of feedback discussions with interpreters at the end of interviews, and record observations when attending meetings and events. During the course of fieldwork the researcher established good relationships with various individuals within migrant and voluntary organisations. These links contributed greatly to the generation of the data and became an integral part of the research process. They provided the researcher with the opportunity to attend various meetings and events convened by groups such as migrant advocacy organisations and friendship clubs.

The use of a research journal helps the process of reflexivity in qualitative research. Reflexivity is intrinsic to the interpretive paradigm and the qualitative approach to social inquiry (Hennink et al., 2011). Referred to as 'the researcher's active consideration of his or her place in the research' (Bailey, 2007, p.119) reflexivity considers the 'implications of their methods, values, biases and decisions for the knowledge of the social world they generate' (Bryman, 2008, p.682). As distinguished by Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) there are two types of reflexivity; personal and interpersonal. Personal reflexivity refers to the role of the researcher and how their background, assumptions and actions influence the research and the data created, whereas interpersonal reflexivity considers 'the important situational dynamics between the researcher and the researched that can impact the

creation of knowledge' (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006, p.146). Reflexive practice serves to acknowledge and manage issues of subjectivity, which is brought into the research by both the researcher and its participants. Reflexivity is a method that can address these subjectivities and may act as a form of validation in the research process (Pillow, 2003). While the practice of reflexivity is imperative to the interpretive paradigm, its degree of practice is a common concern. Hennink et al. (2011, p.21) stress the importance of finding a balance; one that achieves comprehensive reflexivity but avoids analytical paralysis.

4.7 Participant Selection, Access and Recruitment

This section focuses on participant selection, access and recruitment. It examines the categories of participants involved in the research and reflects on the process of gaining access and recruiting interviewees.

Migrant Participants

As previously stipulated, the categories of migrants under investigation were nationals of A8 and A2 countries. In total 30 migrants (18 female and 12 male) participated in the research. Within the defined study population the research endeavoured to include all nationalities[5]. However, with the number of migrants disproportionate by each nationality, it was expected that the majority of participants would be from the A8 category and mainly Polish nationals who account for the largest migrant group in Northern Ireland. A breakdown of the participants by country of origin and case study location is provided in Table 4.2.

Case study participants		
Origin country	**Case Study A**	**Case Study B**
Poland	10	11
Romania	-	5
Lithuania	1	-
Ukraine	1	-
Latvia	1	-
Spain	-	1

Table 4.2 Case study participants

[5] One participant was from Ukraine (Non-EU country) but was living in other EU countries before arrival in Northern Ireland. Another participant was from Spain (EU country since 1986) and although not within the remit of the research, was eager to take part.

In research settings gaining access to participants is not always a straightforward task. In each case study area multiple strategies were adopted to facilitate access to potential interviewees. This technique was employed for several reasons including; increased access and opportunities to recruit participants, moderating issues of gate-keeping and accounting for unsuccessful access routes. Using multiple routes also facilitated wider recruitment of participants, by reducing the likelihood of migrants with similar network connections, which may have limited the possibility in capturing a range of experiences. Modes of gaining entry into the research field are outlined in Table 4.3.

Access routes for migrant recruitment	
Case Study A	
A migrant advocacy organisation	7
An ad hoc migrant group	2
A migrant inter-faith group	2
Personal connections	1
Snowballing	1
Case Study B	
A migrant advocacy organisation	1
A friendship club	3
A community partnership group	1
English language classes at a local college	4
Random recruitment at ethnic food shops	2
Interpreter leads	3
Snowballing	3

Table 4.3 Access routes for migrant recruitment

Recruitment and Gatekeeping

The access routes listed in Table 4.3 were successful strategies in recruiting participants. Unsuccessful methods included advertising the research on the social networking sites of migrant groups and organisations (translated or communicated as necessary by the organisation) and approaching employers in each case study area. With employers a series of email and telephone contacts proved fruitless. One employer did allow the research to be advertised on a notice board in the workplace, but unsurprisingly this did not yield participants. It was not anticipated that these strategies would grant access, especially with employers, and so a decision was made to pursue other routes that were proving more successful. These feelings were confirmed through conversations with staff at a migrant advocacy group and the opinions of an interpreter who assisted in the research. It was expected that employers would be dubious about the research, believing that employees may reflect their company in a negative manner. This barrier to recruitment was overcome however, as other routes and snowballing techniques resulted in contact being made with

research participants within these employment sectors. With regards to the use of Internet and social networking sites, a combination of an unlikely response rate and feelings of caution in responding to online messages meant that these routes were not pursued further. In each case study the different methods of recruiting migrants had varying levels of success as illustrated in Table 4.3.

Gatekeepers are 'those individuals in an organisation that have the power to withhold access to people or situations for the purpose of research' (Minichiello et al., 1997, p.171). Generally gatekeepers did not hamper access to the research field. In CSA, the majority of migrants were recruited from the local advocacy group, whereas in CSB only one participant was sourced from a similar organisation. In CSB one gatekeeper, a manager from a migrant advocacy organisation, reluctantly promised access but did not deliver on this promise:

> "I would just say that loads of people from Queen's have come here to do different pieces of research and of course we have helped them. But I always say to them to let me see a copy of the report, but not one has ever come back...Oh, there was one girl from America who sent me her report. She was very, very professional."
>
> *Researcher: "Yes I can understand that. I will be also undertaking research in America as part of this study. I can tell you that providing the organisation with a report of the key findings is part of the research process. I have carried this out before when I conducted Masters research in four Northern Ireland schools and each school was provided with a summary report at the end. This is important because it is not good research practice to do research, disappear with the results and not feedback to your participants. I can understand the reservations you may have from previous experiences but I can tell you that it is my intention to provide a report to each of the organisations who are assisting my research."*
>
> "Yes, it sets a bad precedent for students who come after you. Because then people like myself are tired of putting so much in. I want it to be a good piece of research because you are doing it in [CSB], I want it to be good and I want it to be authentic and I want it to be as real as possible but at the end of the day people just disappear and then the next batch will come next year. I'm sure some students will come and I will say 'oh no'...the emails [saying] 'I am a student' and you say [to yourself] 'oh no'." (Manager, Migrant advocacy organisation, CSB)

The situation outlined above ended with the manager of the organisation saying that she would 'be in touch', with invitations to upcoming events and that she would also organise interviews with migrants who use the organisation. Despite repeated follow-up emails, telephone calls and coincidental encounters at other events, no further progress was made.

A similar experience was encountered in CSA. In comparison to CSB where some participants were recruited through English language classes at a local college, the coordinator of these classes in CSA would not permit access:

> "If you want to learn more about minority ethnic communities I suggest you contact the [migrant advocacy group in CSA]." (Coordinator of ESOL courses in local college in CSA)

The reasons for recruiting participants through the local college were explained to the coordinator: to access those participants who may not be linked with advocacy groups, to reach those with and without language tuition, and to tap into different migrant networks to gather a range of experiences. However no further response was received.

Both of these incidents of gatekeeping did not hinder participant recruitment as alternative strategies proved effective. Gaining access to research participants is inevitably an unpredictable and at times difficult task. Understandably, the research did not employ a strict method of sampling but followed a strategy of opportunism and snowballing research leads. Through the process of snowballing and exploiting migrant networks, new research participants were sourced and the recruitment strategies proved successful. However, it must be stressed that even this method brought challenges, not least of which were coordinating logistics of participant's availability due to changeable employment schedules and family life, along with arranging interpretation assistance.

Civil Society Participants

In addition to the experiences of migrants, the research also involved gaining an insight into the roles, functioning and perspectives of various agencies and organisations within the statutory, community and voluntary sector. Participants were sourced both within the case study areas and on a regional scale within Northern Ireland. It also included interviews conducted in Upstate New York. In total, 37 interviews were conducted across all study areas. A list of participants is located in Table 4.4.

State and civil society research participants
Regional Statutory Agencies
OFMDFM Race Equality Unit (n=1)
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Senior Housing Officer (n=1)
District and area managers (n=3)
Local Council Representatives
Good Relations Officers (n=3)
Community Development Officer (n=1)
Regional NGOs
Housing Rights Service Policy Officer (n=1)
Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM)
Executive Director (n=1)
Regional Office Development Officer (n=1)
Barnardos Children's Charity – Migrant Project (n=1)
Case Study Areas
Migrant advocacy organisations (n=2)
Ad hoc migrant support group (n=1)
Employee from community partnership (n=1)
College tutors of English language classes (n=2)
Representative from migrant faith group (n=1)
Volunteers from friendship club (n=3)
Pioneer migrants (n=3)
Interpreter (n=1)
New York State
Academics from the Department of Development Sociology, Cornell University, Ithaca (n=2)
Friends of Farmworkers Programme (n=1)
Catholic Charities of Tompkins County (n=1)
La Casa Catholic Charities Programme (n=1)
Justice Centre New York (n=1)
Finger Lakes Agricultural Workers Programme (n=1)
Representatives at the Mobile Mexican Consulate (n=2)
TST Boces English Language Programme (n=1)

Table 4.4 State and civil society research participants

4.8 Ethical Considerations

Good ethical conduct permeates all stages of the research process, from the initial phase of planning research, whilst in the field and throughout the write-up and dissemination processes (Flick, 2007). There were a number of ethical issues that arose during the research process including: obtaining informed consent, exercising the participant's right to anonymity, ensuring appropriate levels of confidentiality, respecting cultural sensitivities, managing potentially delicate interview subject and taking into consideration issues of researcher bias, values and judgement. Observing ethical principles ensured that the research was conducted in a professional and overt manner, 'designed, reviewed and undertaken in a way that ensures its integrity, quality and transparency' (ESRC, 2010). The research received ethical approval in January 2012 in line with the guidelines and standards

set by the University's Code of Good Conduct in Research and its Policy on the Ethical Approval of Research. It also followed the principles outlined out by Connolly (2003) and ESRC (2010) when researching vulnerable groups.

Free and Informed Consent

Ensuring that research participants fully understand their position in research is an important ethical principle. Free and informed consent was offered to all participants prior to the commencement of fieldwork. The researcher provided potential interviewees with a detailed project information sheet and consent form provided in Appendices 4 and 5. These forms contained all the necessary information for participants to make a fully informed decision to take part. The option of a translated version was offered, however in cases where an interpreter was present, a verbal translation was more appropriate. In most cases, interviewees preferred information to be communicated verbally rather than via an information sheet. Participants were also given options regarding assigning consent. Some interviewees did not want to sign the consent form, in which case verbal consent was accepted.

Incentivising research participants is a contentious ethical issue. Some argue that incentives may act as a form of coercion, while others see it as reimbursing participants for their time and effort (Grant and Sugarman, 2004). Offering incentives raises questions over the nature of the incentive, its value and the possible implications of incentives when participants are encouraged to take part 'against their better judgement' (Grant and Sugarman, 2004, p.729). In this research participants were not offered monetary incentives. However, this does not reflect the opinion of the researcher but rather the absence of sufficient funds to do so. It should be stressed that no interviewee gave any expectation of payment. The researcher made this clear at the outset, informing potential participants what would be required from them (i.e. up to one hour of their time) and reinforcing that participation was entirely voluntary. Indeed many expressed internal motivators in wanting to take part (Clark, 2010). Some participants, many of whom had completed academic degrees, understood why I was carrying out research and were keen to help. Others felt strongly about the research topic and were eager to express their opinions. In a small number of instances where migrants did place constraints on their time, they participated for as long as they could devote. At no stage did any participant ask to withdraw from the research or convey any concerns over its nature.

Participant Anonymity and Levels of Confidentiality

Research participants from migrant communities were assured of anonymity through appropriate levels of confidentiality. In the case of statutory, community and voluntary groups, appropriate levels of confidentiality were offered through the provision of suitable steps to make individuals anonymous. Initially it was considered sufficient to anonymise research participants. However, after further consideration it was deemed necessary to conceal the locations of case study areas and the names of particular groups and organisations affiliated to the research. The option of using pseudonyms was considered, but at a later stage in the research. In most cases they may not have been sufficient in concealing identities (Iphofen, 2009) and as argued by Grinyer (2002) the selection of pseudonyms can be socially and culturally inappropriate if not discussed during the consent process. There are others aspects that must be considered in the application of anonymity tools. In this study, connections could have been made between migrants' profiles, with attributes such as age, nationality and employer possibly compromising anonymity. Several examples are provided in Appendix 6 to illustrate the decisions taken to ensure anonymity.

While participants were made aware of the option of anonymity, they were also informed of the ways in which the data would be used as part of this thesis and in future research such as journal publications. Issues of confidentiality are also important when working with interpreters in research. A briefing session was carried out with the interpreter to clarify their role and responsibilities, inform them of the nature and purpose of the research and to sign a confidentiality agreement (Appendix 7). The use of interpreters in qualitative research will be examined further in Section 4.9.

Researcher Positionality and Sensitive Issues

Conducting social research is more than simply collecting data. It raises issues such as the role and position of the researcher and the possibility of sensitive topics being raised. Care was exercised in respecting cultural values and being aware of potentially sensitive subjects that may have arose during the study. Participants were made aware that they were not obliged to answer any questions they were uncomfortable with. Interviewees were also given the opportunity to discuss issues not addressed by the researcher, which also aided data validity.

The researcher anticipated that being from a different cultural background to the respondents, with only English language skills, may have impacted on participant recruitment and data generation. Migrants were eager to take part, were interested in why the research was being conducted and in many cases felt that they were contributing to a piece of research with a direct or indirect impact on their lives. However, the researcher was careful to ensure that migrants were not lured into thinking that they would in some way benefit from the research. Some participants could also relate to the researcher as a student and were willing to take part based on similar experiences of doing research as part of a degree. The researcher was also conscious of how she was perceived by state and civil society participants. As discussed in Section 4.7, different individuals granted varying levels of access. Generally individuals from the migrant community were welcoming to the research, whereas those from the local community were less so.

4.9 Interpreters and Translation in Qualitative Research

The use of language, interpretation and translation were important methodological considerations. The act of translation and interpretation raises significant questions in qualitative research, with the translation process having important ontological, epistemological and methodological considerations (Temple and Young, 2004). As the research adopted a non-positivist stance, translators became part of social reality and involved in the process of knowledge production. As claimed by Murray and Wynne (2001) this results in 'three-way production of data' with the interpreter contributing to and influencing the data generation process.

The procedures used in interpreter facilitated interviews are thought to have implications for research rigour and data validity (Williamson et al., 2011). The most significant issue relates to the role of the interpreter and their level of involvement in the research process. Temple and Young (2004) question whether translators should be seen as 'key informants' or 'neutral transmitters' of knowledge. While there are varying perspectives on the level of involvement, it has been noted that increasingly interpreters are taking on 'hybrid roles', making them both analysts and cultural brokers as well as translators (Temple and Young, 2004). Debate also surrounds whether interpreters translate verbatim or be allowed to use their own judgement and contribute to the process of generating meaning. To ensure consistency and validity it is important to establish the participant – researcher – interpreter relationship at the outset of the research. The question of 'who' translates may also have an impact. The characteristics, background, skills and knowledge base of the

interpreter may be influential on data collection and interpretation. If interpreters are not fully aware and in tune with the aims of the research, this may undermine the research data. Building rapport within a 'three-way production of data' is crucial, as is an equal power balance within this relationship.

The research involved interviewing migrants whose first language was not English and with varying levels of English language competency. All participants were offered the use of an interpreter. Out of the 30 interviews 10 were conducted with interpreter assistance. Initial fieldwork planning anticipated that interpreters would be sourced from specialist providers. However, alternative strategies were used for recruiting interpreters. The success of using a migrant advocacy organisation for recruiting participants in CSA was identified earlier. The organisation was based within a housing estate with close connections amongst the migrant community and its users were very closely connected to the two employees, both of whom were migrants. They suggested that participants would be most comfortable using them as interpreters and they offered to interpret free of charge.

In CSB, the researcher used a professional interpreter through personal recommendation. The interpreter, an earlier migrant to Northern Ireland, expressed similar views in that people may be more likely to participate if they feel a personal connection with the interpreter rather than using an 'outside' interpreter from a specialist provider. The success rate and quality of these interviews confirmed these hypotheses. It must be acknowledged that language did affect who participated in the research. This was not a result of inadequate techniques in reaching those participants with no language skills. Some migrants did not feel confident enough to participate, with a combination of low levels of English language and a sense of embarrassment in using an interpreter. Although all participants were encouraged and reassured, their reasons had to be accepted.

A consecutive process of interpretation was used whereby; the researcher asks a question, the interpreter translates to the participant and the response is conveyed back in the same manner. The interpreter was required to translate verbatim to ensure consistency and validity; however the researcher was mindful of any thoughts expressed by the interpreter regarding the translation and interpretation of interview subjects. This issue was expressed by both interpreters in that sometimes word-by-word translation is not possible. At times the interpreter listened to the interviewee's complete response and then relayed this back to the researcher. By adhering to a protocol on the use of interpreters and by practicing

reflexivity throughout the research, this helped address issues related to data interpretation. In this research, interpreters did become part of data generation. At times they gave insights into why some migrants may not want to take part. For example, even though EU migrants are legal, they fear that agencies such as the United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA) may be monitoring them in a covert way. In some cases interpreters also helped clarify certain phrases that may have been misinterpreted by differences in pronunciation between languages. Validity was ensured however by discussing any interpretation issues with the interpreter, re-reading transcripts and conducting follow-up interviews to make clarifications as necessary.

4.10 Data Analysis and Interpretation

The analytic stage of qualitative research involves immersion in the data (Hennink et al., 2011). This requires the researcher to make connections between the participants' unique perspectives and the aim and objectives of the study. Data analysis was a continuous process throughout the research. In preparation, all interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim by the researcher. This was initiated at an early stage to achieve greater familiarity with the data and strengthen the interpretation process. By simultaneously collecting, transcribing and analysing interview transcripts this enhanced research validity. It also allowed amendments and refinements to be made to the research questions as necessary. Commencing data analysis early allowed weak questions or irrelevant subjects to be identified and tailored for subsequent interviews. The researcher's interviewing technique also developed as she became more confident in probing and encouraging interviewees.

Data analysis started with the process of coding: identifying issues, topics and opinions that appear in the data (Hennink et al., 2011). The study used King and Horrocks's (2010) three stages of coding starting with descriptive codes, then moving on to more interpretive codes and finally to overarching themes that were linked back to the conceptual framework. Qualitative data analysis is not a neat task and this was experienced by the researcher. The use of computer assisted packages Atlas.ti and NVivo were explored. Atlas.ti was used initially to identify primary descriptive codes, such as migrants' reasons for migration and issues or factors related to their housing and employment experiences. But it was decided not to pursue this method for several reasons. The first reason was that time in familiarising with the software was proving counterproductive. A more significant reason was the evolving and messy nature of qualitative data analysis. With continual refinements being

made to the theoretical framework, the researcher found it more productive to work with physical copies of the transcripts. The preferred method of data analysis involved reading and re-reading transcripts numerous times, making connections back to the research aim and objectives.

4.11 Summary

This chapter outlined the methodological approach, design and methods adopted in this research. It builds on the migration literature in Chapter 2 and conceptual framework in Chapter 3 to demonstrate the need for a robust methodological framework in migration studies. It shows that migration research does not rest on strict methodological beliefs or advocate precise strategies. In fact it argues the need to be flexible in using mixed and multiple methods that are most appropriate for answering the research aim and objectives. The research employed a primarily qualitative approach using interviews to generate depth of data, but included quantitative sources and techniques to complement and add additional perspectives; to further investigate the links between structure and agency. This chapter acknowledges that there are methodological challenges, but these are inherent to all research practices and have been managed effectively to ensure research validity. The next chapter moves on to present the first of three empirical and analytical chapters.

CHAPTER 5

Northern Ireland: A New Migration Destination

5.1 Introduction

Chapters 1 to 4 set out the rationale and context for this thesis: identifying gaps in the migration literature, devising a theoretical framework to examine modern migration, and designing a methodological approach to answer the research aim and objectives. This chapter presents the empirical analysis using the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 3 to guide that analysis. First the legislative and policy framework that governs migration processes is scrutinised and includes the devolved Northern Ireland government and its relationship to the UK. This is set within the broader framework of the EU. The chapter will examine recent migration trends with cognisance of the unusual socio-political background within Northern Ireland as context. Finally, secondary data sources and statistical techniques are used to examine the way in which migration is currently represented and mediated in Northern Ireland.

5.2 Migration Governance

This section will examine the multi-level governance framework that controls and regulates contemporary migration processes. Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrated how migration governance structures are no longer contained within the borders of nation states, but are embedded in large scale structural arrangements (Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2011). The EU as an inter-governmental organisation (IGO) is one such structure. Along with the UK and the devolved Northern Ireland administration, it has regulated and shaped the movement of EU migrants into the UK. These multi-level structures are explored further in this section.

The European Union

The EU, formerly the EEC (European Economic Community), was established in 1957 under the Treaty of Rome between six founding Member States (Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and West Germany). Its formation, in the aftermath of the Second World War, was to encourage prosperity and promote peace, equality and democracy between European countries, with the goal of achieving European economic integration (Davies, 2013). It aimed to do this though protection of its citizens by the rule of law and by enforcing principles of human rights. It also sought to provide freedom for its

citizens through the creation of an internal market[6], to promote the free movement of goods, services, labour and capital (EUROPA, 2014). Successive Treaties and Directives have been enacted to ensure that Member States adhere to legislative and policy procedures in working towards political, economic and social integration.

Following successive enlargements the EU currently consists of 28 Member States. In joining the EU, Member States sign agreements that bind them to particular legislation. The most recent and significant of these enlargement processes, and on which this research is based, occurred in 2004. At this time the Accession 8 Countries joined the EU and were followed shortly in 2007 by the Accession 2 Countries.

- Accession 8: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia
- Accession 2: Bulgaria and Romania

Citizens from A8 Countries joined the EU with unrestricted access to the UK labour market. The only condition was that these migrants had to register under the Worker Registration Scheme, a system that ceased in April 2011 meaning full rights and entitlements as EU nationals. Migrants from A2 Countries did have restrictions placed on their right to live and work in the UK, until 1 January 2014 when they were subsequently lifted. Further details on migrants' rights and entitlements are outlined in Table 5.1 later in the chapter.

Membership of the EU grants citizens the right to live and work freely in any other Member State. This means that citizens have the right to be treated equally as nationals of that country with respect to residency, employment and education. Member States can however set their own laws and policies on matters related to welfare systems, health care and other social security issues (EUROPA, 2014). EU policy on migration and integration was introduced in 2004 through a document detailing 'Common Basic Principles on Integration'. However, this referred specifically to non-EU migrants and has no bearing on citizens from within the EU. In 2010 the Zaragoza Declaration was adopted; a pilot study to help formulate and implement a series of integration indicators that would evaluate the success of integration policies of each Member State. Indicators are based on four policy areas; employment, education, social inclusion and active citizenship. The project aims to help

[6] Also known as the Single Market and the Common Market

harmonise data sources and monitor the situations of migrants across all EU Countries (EC, 2011).

The United Kingdom and Northern Ireland

Like many parts of the EU, in this case the UK, national legislation and migration laws are different for EU and non-EU migrants. Migrants from within the EU are governed by principles and policies as outlined in the previous section. Northern Ireland is situated within the jurisdiction of the UK which became part of the EU (then EEC) in 1973. Northern Ireland has a long and complex history of being governed directly by Westminster and through devolved powers of the Northern Ireland Parliament at Stormont. Devolution was constituted under the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which led to the establishment of the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Northern Ireland Executive, amidst an emerging peace process (also known as the Belfast Agreement). Devolution means that Northern Ireland has legislative control of 'transferred matters' including: justice; health and social services; employment and skills; education; agriculture; a parity agreement on social security; housing; planning and environment; economic development; transport; culture and sport. 'Excepted matters' include nationality, immigration and asylum, and they remain the responsibility of HM government and Westminster; hence there are limits within Northern Ireland's governance framework.

The devolved Northern Ireland Assembly holds legislative power and is responsible for appointing an Executive to conduct administrative functions across 12 government departments. One of these departments is the Office of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) and the Equality Commission, soon to be Equality and Good Relations after merging with the Community Relations Council. Despite having little control over migration policy set by Westminster, the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive is responsible for creating and implementing equality legislation. The Belfast Agreement led to important policy developments in this area.

Equality matters are embedded within *Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998* of the Belfast Agreement. Public authorities are obliged to carry out their functions to promote equality of opportunity irrespective of religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation. Significant in this development was the shift from 'community' relations to 'good' relations. No longer are relations conceptualised solely between two majority groups, Catholic and Protestant, but inclusive of all ethnic groups

and including minority communities. The *Race Relations Order (Northern Ireland) 1997*, with further amendments in 2003, 2009 and 2012, outlaws discrimination on racial grounds to include colour, race, nationality and ethnicity. However, in order to provide consistency in equality legislation there are calls to implement a Single Equality Act. This is similar to other UK jurisdictions, whereby promoting equality, eliminating discrimination and encouraging good relations is addressed in a single piece of legislation.

Several policy and strategy initiatives also followed the Belfast Agreement. The first key document, *A Shared Future: Policy and strategic framework for good relations in Northern Ireland*, was devised under direct rule in 2005. Once devolution was restored in 2007 this document was rejected by the Assembly. Its replacement *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* (CSI) underwent public consultation in 2010 but was ultimately shelved due to contestation over its inadequate response to community relations. Its long awaited updated version *Together: Building a United Future* (TBUC) was published in May 2013. This strategy aims to continue working towards a shared and united society, underpinned by principles that promote diversity, inclusion, rights and tolerance. It aims to build a cohesive community through four key priority areas that focus on; children and young people, a shared community, a safe community and through cultural expression. The diversity brought about by immigration is acknowledged, with the strategy outlining how it will work alongside the Racial Equality Strategy to achieve:

> 'a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance' (OFMDFM, 2013, p.11)

The *Racial Equality Strategy* (OFMDFM, 2005) is another key document that underpins racial equality practices across all government departments. The strategy aims to address inequalities and promote participation of all minority ethnic communities. This has been long due for renewal as it spans from 2005 to 2010. At the time of writing the new document *A Sense of Belonging – Delivering Social Change through a Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland 2014-2024* was under consultation. A perceived key weakness of the 2005 strategy was the absence of ethnic monitoring, as it is considered by many

stakeholders to be a crucial element of a robust strategy. In addition to the new strategy, a series of Racial Equality Indicators are also proposed to monitor:

- Equality of service provision (health, education, housing, employment, learning and sport)
- Combating racism, prejudice and hate crime
- Participation, representation and belonging
- Respecting cultural diversity (OFMDFM, 2014)

Northern Ireland has no single department responsible for migration matters, but these legislative developments and policy areas highlight the potential for different government departments to impact on migration related issues across society. Individual state agencies and QUANGO's (Quasi -Autonomous Non-Governmental Organisations) carry out functions such as housing, social security and health and social services, who then report to regional government. Local government is administered through Councils who also carry out a range of roles and responsibilities such as service provision. Northern Ireland has a long established and active community and voluntary sector. There are many organisations that provide support to migrants and ethnic minorities. For example, the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities[7] (NICEM) and the Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership[8] (NISMP) advocate on behalf of existing and new ethnic minority groups.

In 2002 a Review of Public Administration in Northern Ireland was launched to consider reform on public service delivery. A lengthy process that brought much debate over the re-configuration of council boundaries and future arrangements for the accountability, development and administration of public services, it will result in a reduction of 26 councils to 11 by 1 April 2015. The new super councils are to have new powers in areas such as planning, regeneration and good relations.

[7] The Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM) works to eliminate racial discrimination and promote racial equality. It does this through several core functions including: identifying and presenting the views of the sector; policy, research and information; community infrastructure; capacity building for Black and Minority Ethnic communities; racial equality support services; advocacy and advice; and campaigning and networking.

[8] The Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership (NISMP) is an independent body that works across government, private and voluntary sectors to address the needs and concerns of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in Northern Ireland.

Within this structure of governance in Northern Ireland, EU migrants have a range of rights and entitlements. Table 5.1 outlines access to services in key sectors, with Appendix 8 detailing the range of help and support materials available to migrants in Northern Ireland.

EU migrant rights and entitlements in Northern Ireland	
Employment	All EU migrants currently have the right to work in both the private and public sector. *Since 2004: A8 migrants have unrestricted access to the labour market.* *Since 2007 until 31 December 2013: A2 migrants were limited to either highly skilled positions or quota-based schemes in low-skilled work in agriculture and food processing.* Migrant employees have the same basic rights and entitlements as local employees. Migrants' qualifications should be recognised in the same way as local qualifications. This is delivered through a Qualification Equivalency situated at eight local benefits offices.
Housing	All EU nationals are currently entitled to social housing subject to being in employment or actively searching for work. *Since 2004: A8 migrants were entitled to social housing subject to being in employment for one continuous year.* *Since 2007 until 31 December 2013: A2 migrants needed to be registered under the Worker Authorisation Scheme and have worked for one continuous year.*
Welfare	From 1 April 2014 EU migrants are not eligible to access benefits for the first 3 months. Prior to this, all EU migrants needed to work for 12 continuous months before welfare entitlement.
Health	EU citizens are entitled to free health and social care provided through the NHS upon registration with a General Practitioner (GP). Migrants have a right to access an interpreter provided by Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Boards.
Education	EU nationals have the right to access schools, further and higher education establishments. For children whose first language is not English additional support should be provided.
Voting	EU nationals can vote in Local and European Parliamentary Elections after being resident in Northern Ireland for 3 months. (Only UK citizens can vote in UK General Elections)

Table 5.1 EU migrant rights and entitlements in Northern Ireland

5.3 Migration and Northern Ireland

This section presents recent migration patterns to Northern Ireland. It also identifies and evaluates current knowledge on new migrants and considers the unique context of Northern Ireland for examining modern migration processes.

New Migration Patterns

Historically Northern Ireland has been a country of emigration experiencing a net migration loss until the early 1990s (NIA, 2012). Immigration became characteristic, albeit in small volumes, with the establishment of Chinese and Indian communities during the 1960s and 1970s[9], with the 2001 Census identifying 14,279 people as belonging to a range of ethnic minority communities (NIA, 2011). From the 1990s there were further increases with Asian and Filipino migrants dominant in the health sector and Portuguese migrants in fishing and other food processing industries. It was during the early 2000s that Northern Ireland experienced an unprecedented rise in migrants from central and eastern European countries. Most recently there are also modest numbers of Roma and asylum seekers and refugees from several African countries.

EU migration to Northern Ireland has been the most pronounced, forming the basis of this research. Triggered by EU enlargement processes in 2004 and 2007, it has been estimated that 122,000 international migrants arrived in Northern Ireland during this decade (NISRA, 2011). Prior to the 2011 Census methods for recording the number of A8 and A2 migrants in Northern Ireland were sporadic and piecemeal, often based on proxies including the Worker Registration Scheme[10] (WRS), National Insurance Number registrations, Health Card registrations, the Department of Education School Census and the country of birth of new mothers in Northern Ireland. These mechanisms did provide fairly accurate estimates of the A8 and A2 population. Although the 2011 Census provides a much clearer picture, it too is not a perfect mechanism. Approximately 35,503 A8 and A2 migrants currently reside in Northern Ireland, accounting for 2 per cent of the population and with Polish nationals the largest migrant group (Table 5.2) (NISRA, 2011). In comparison, the 2001 Census identified 0.6 per cent of Northern Ireland's population from EU countries (non-UK and Ireland), highlighting the scale and pace of recent change (NISRA, 2001).

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[9] Prior to the 1900s there were also small volumes of Jewish and Vietnamese migrants (NIA, 2011).

[10] The WRS required registration of new A8 migrants intending to work in the UK for longer than one month. A weakness of the system was that it did not require de-registration, hence it did not record the number of migrants leaving the UK. This WRS ceased on 1 April 2011.

Volume of A8 and A2 European migrants in Northern Ireland	
A8 and A2 Countries	**35,503**
A8 Countries	**33,760**
Poland	19,658
Lithuania	7,341
Slovakia	2,681
Latvia	2,297
Hungary	999
Czech Republic	662
Estonia	99
Slovenia	23
A2 Countries	**1,743**
Romania	1,094
Bulgaria	649

Table 5.2 Volume of A8 and A2 European migrants in Northern Ireland
(Source: NISRA, 2011)

It is estimated that immigration to Northern Ireland reached its peak in 2007 as identified by the number of National Insurance Number registrations in Table 5.3. Again there is debate on the accuracy of these figures with claims of an under estimation. High volumes did coincide with a peak in the economy, followed by the onset of recession and falling registrations from 2008.

National Insurance Number registrations to Non-UK Nationals											
2003	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**
2,453	4,571	5,761	16,057	19,686	17,652	12,642	7,530	9,399	8,029	7,795	9,057
											**Calculated in March each year*

Table 5.3 National Insurance Number Registrations to Non-UK Nationals
(Source: DWP, 2014)

Despite a steady fall in the volume of new migrants arriving in recent years, a stable and growing migrant population has emerged through family reunification and natural increase. In 2012 births to mothers from A8 and A2 countries accounted for 5 per cent (1,307) of all births in Northern Ireland, compared to 1.7 per cent (390) in 2006 and 0.2 per cent (34) in 2004 (NISRA, 2012). Migration patterns are further evidenced through the number of school pupils classified as 'newcomer' pupils; a pupil 'who does not have satisfactory language skills to participate fully in the school curriculum and does not have a language in

common with the teacher' (DENI, 2014). As illustrated in Table 5.4 newcomer pupils have increased each year in Northern Ireland schools since 2004.

Newcomer pupils in Northern Ireland Schools

	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14
Primary	1,333	1,902	2,630	3,809	4,660	5,130	5,392	5,632	6,481	7,425
Post-Primary	665	703	1,148	1,714	2,142	2,402	2,450	2,482	2,518	2,501
All schools*	2,056	2,681	3,991	5,665	6,995	7,754	8,093	8,418	9,417	10,698

**Including nursery and hospital schools*

Table 5.4 Newcomer pupils in Northern Ireland schools (Source: DENI, 2014)

The increasing number of school pupils with English as an additional language is also reflected in the number of interpreter requests made through Health Trusts, a service launched in June 2004. In the year 2011-12, there were a total of 63,868 interpretation requests across all Health Trust areas, a significant increase from 35,103 in 2008-09 and 1,850 in 2004-05 (BHSCT, 2013). In 2011-12 approximately half (32,798) of these requests were made in the Southern Health Trust, with Polish (21,780) and Lithuanian (12,485) languages most requested (BHSCT, 2013).

The geographical dispersion of new migrants across Northern Ireland is different from earlier migration patterns that were predominately to urban areas, namely Belfast. New patterns are similar to international trends with migrants locating beyond traditional cities to new rural and peripheral destinations (McAreavey, 2012 and forthcoming 2014). Figure 5.1 illustrates the distribution of A8 and A2 migrants across Northern Ireland as a percentage of the native population at ward level. The distribution shows high concentrations in areas such as Dungannon, Craigavon and Newry, but dispersed throughout the region in smaller concentrations and volumes. For example, areas within Case Study B in this research have experienced up to 30 per cent increases in A8 and A2 migrants. Caution should be exercised however as this data is at a micro level, skewed by smaller overall volumes in the whole population. Across the province at ward level, more realistic concentrations in proportion to the overall population, range from 3 to 20 per cent as indicated in Figure 5.1 (NISRA, 2011). These figures do increase slightly when other non-EU migrants are included.

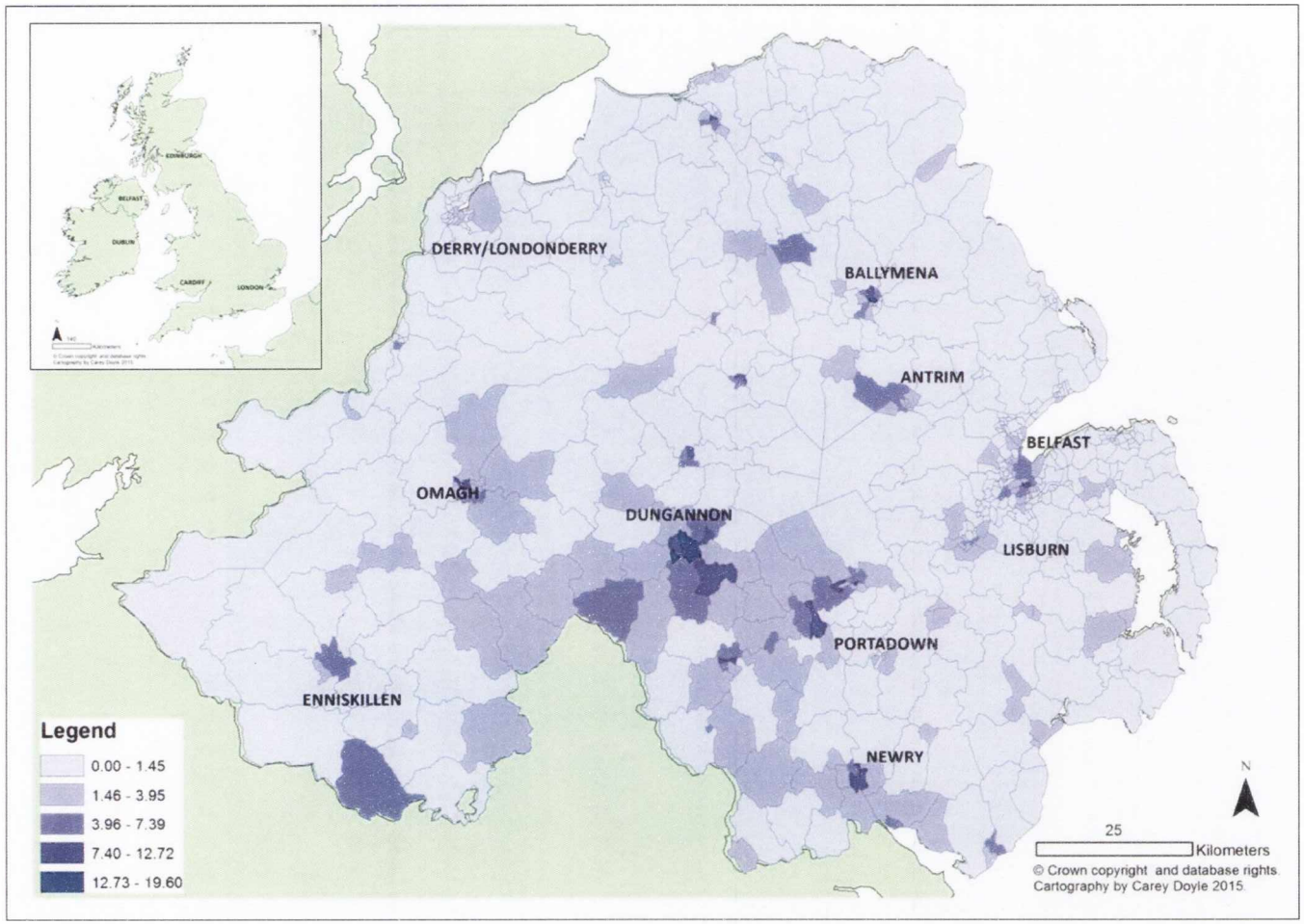


Figure 5.1 Distribution of migrants from A8 and A2 Countries in Northern Ireland (Percentage of Northern Ireland population at ward level) (Source: NISRA, 2011)

The location of migrants is also recorded in the registration of births to non-UK and Ireland mothers in 2012, ranging from 3 per cent in Ballymoney (North Antrim) to 23 per cent in Dungannon (Tyrone) (NISRA, 2012). This is further evidenced by the level of English language in households, with 14,976 households in Northern Ireland not having English as a main language. Figure 5.2 illustrates the percentage of households with English as a main language. In Dungannon 7 per cent of households do not possess English as a main language. If we examine this feature on a finer scale at ward level, this figure increases to almost 30 per cent (NISRA, 2011).

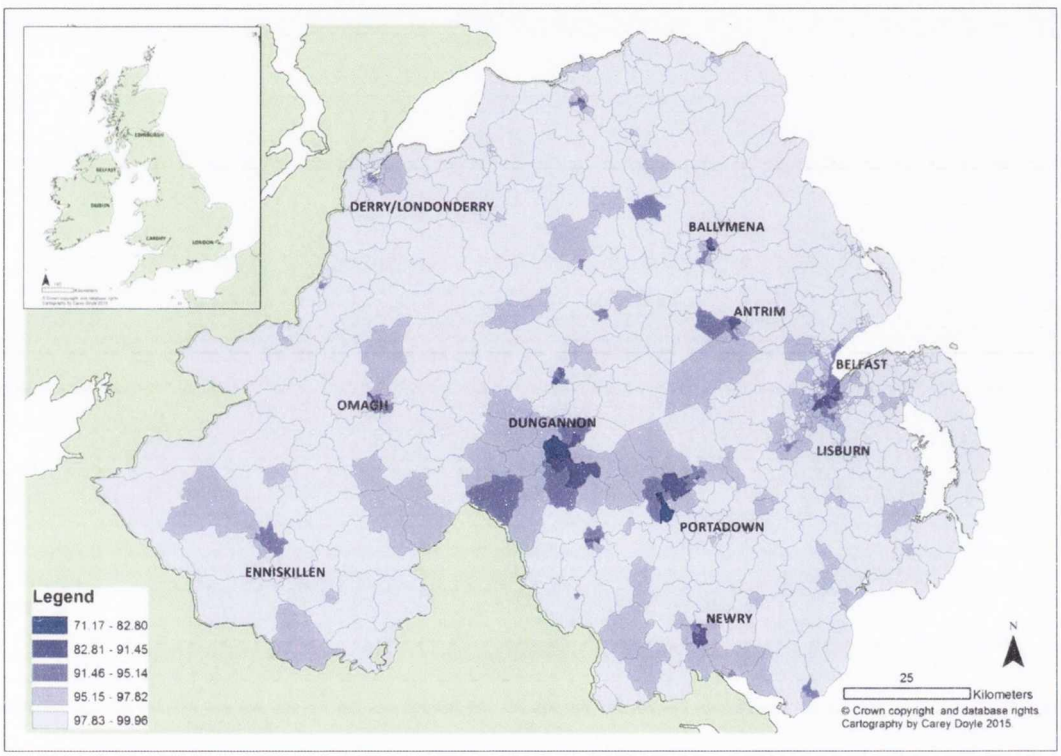


Figure 5.2 Percentage of Northern Ireland households with English as a main language (Source: NISRA, 2011)

The settlement and distribution of EU migrants is largely an influence of Northern Ireland's economy. Global economic growth and labour market mobility initiated by EU enlargement during the 2000s produced new waves of migration. This occurred at a time when Northern Ireland was experiencing a demand for labour in sectors including food processing, manufacturing, production, hospitality and the service sector; positions deemed menial, undesirable and therefore unmet by the local population (Irwin, McAreavey and Murphy, 2014). These patterns and statistics present new phenomena for Northern Ireland. They raise important questions not only on how migrants are experiencing life in a new

destination, but how the state and civil society more generally are responding to this change, made complex by the context of Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland and Migration Research

With migration to Northern Ireland occurring on a scale not previously experienced, it is understandable that early research has focused largely on documenting the patterns and profiles of new migrants and the immediate issues and challenges posed for government and civil society (Bell et al., 2004; Jarman, 2005; Jarman and Byrne, 2007; Bell et al., 2009; Martynowicz and Jarman, 2009; NIA, 2011 and 2012). Previous research has produced a comprehensive base of migrants' initial experiences of life in Northern Ireland, with respect to employment issues, housing trends, access to health care and other public service matters related to interpreting, advice and support (McAreavey, 2010 and 2012). It has also highlighted significant social concerns with migrants encountering instances of intimidation, hate crime and discrimination, which raises significant issues around migrants' identity, culture and community participation (Kempny, 2011).

The identification of these issues is crucial and will continue to have a significant bearing on migrants' experiences. However, migration research agendas both within and beyond Northern Ireland necessitate a deeper and fuller understanding of the processes and practices that encompass contemporary migration, in particular to new destinations. Little is known on how migrants are progressing, their ability to avail of opportunities and to achieve their aspirations. Also significant is how their lives are mediated and shaped by the complex backdrop of Northern Ireland and more broadly, how migration processes are conceptualised and managed in modern society. This research seeks to explore the dynamics between these processes through the framework of structure and agency as outlined in Chapter 3.

Migration and Integration in a Northern Ireland Context

Northern Ireland provides an unusual and complex backdrop to study new migration for two key reasons. First, and continuing the theme of Chapter 2, is that Northern Ireland is a 'new destination' with little history or experience in dealing with immigration. As previously outlined, new destinations are interesting in that they allow us to study how migrants and society experience and effectively address the challenges of migration. But most significant they offer an unexplored context for modern migration processes. The second reason lies in

the socio-political context of Northern Ireland as a society still coming to terms with a historical legacy of conflict and division. This section highlights key issues that are significant to this study.

Northern Ireland has for a long time been an ethnically divided society (Hainsworth, 1998). Ways in which division and separation are manifest are well documented and include: segregated housing and education systems; varying levels of social and economic disadvantage; physical separation through peace walls and high levels of prejudice between two opposing majority communities (Boal, 1996; Jarman and Bell, 2009; Shuttleworth and Lloyd 2009, 2013; Gilligan and Ball, 2011). After several decades of civil and political unrest, it is a society still polarised along two strong ethno-religious identities; Catholic and Protestant. A peace process led to the Belfast Agreement in 1998 and the establishment of a power sharing government. That body continues to aspire to a shared society, one that is often described as being in transition to a post-conflict society (Murtagh, 2011; O'Dowd and Komarova, 2013). Despite these developments binary issues and twin politics persist. Segregation and sectarianism continue to structure life in many ways; from an institutional level to micro level practices within local communities (Murtagh and Murphy, 2011). It could be argued that Northern Ireland is still largely entrenched in dealing with issues of the past and so migration remains low on the policy agenda. As captured by Geoghegan (2010, p.7) 'Northern Ireland appears caught between a political system entrenched in dealing with sectarianism and a multicultural social reality'.

5.4 The Representation of Migration in Northern Ireland

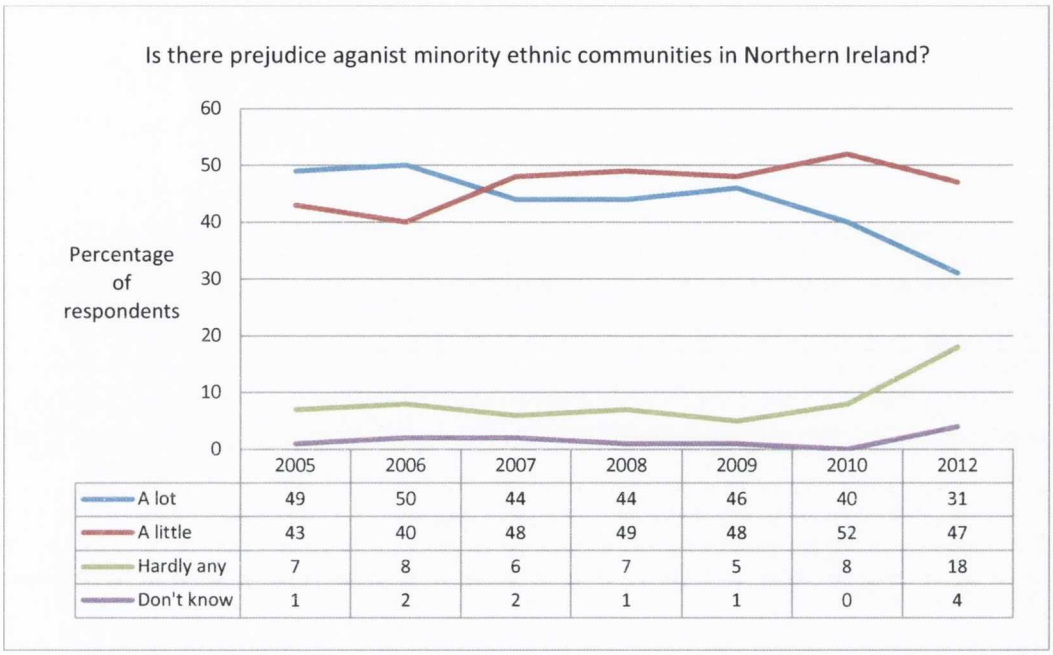
Chapter 2 discussed how current debate views integration as a two-way process between migrants and society. The theoretical framework in Chapter 3 outlined that society is not constituted by fixed structures and observable phenomena, but exhibits features and conditions though which social life is mediated. This involves different actors who are also responsible for the integration of migrant communities. In this respect local communities and other civil society structures can be influential. To gather perspectives from the local population the study employed quantitative data sources, whilst also using statistical techniques to analyse public attitudes towards ethnic minority communities. The purpose of this exercise was to complement the primarily qualitative aspect of the research.

Social Acceptance and Context

The Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) is a regional survey that collects data on social attitudes, values and beliefs on particular issues across society. Since 2005 the annual survey has collected data on public attitudes towards minority ethnic people. Ethnic minorities are categorised as; Irish Travellers, Eastern Europeans and Other Ethnic Groups (including Filipino, Chinese and Asian communities) with questions focusing on each of these social groups. Each year the data set contains approximately 1200 responses of which 4 per cent are from ethnic minority communities (with the exception of 2011). Given the pronounced change in the profiles of migrants that have arrived in Northern Ireland since early 2000, it is important to point out that the format of questions has not been entirely consistent across the years. Nevertheless, the data does provide a time series of attitudes that can be examined on themes including:

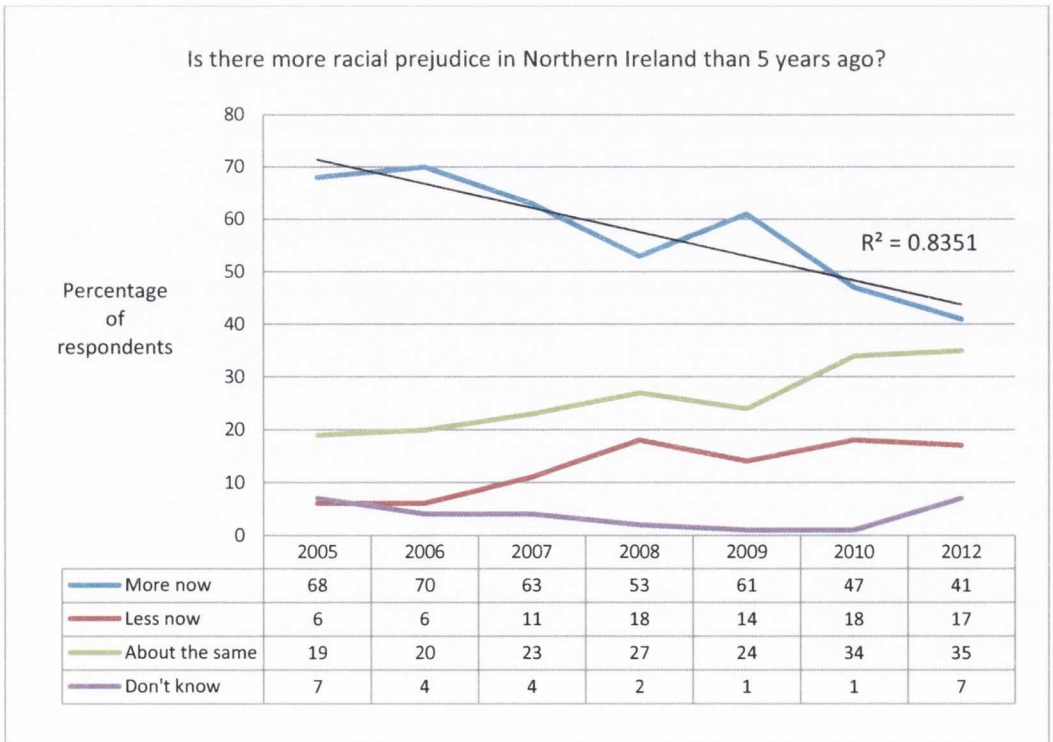
- Perceived levels of prejudice (past, present and future)
- Social acceptance and relations with migrant communities
- Perceptions of migrants' contribution to society in Northern Ireland
- Contact and interaction with migrant communities
- Participation of ethnic communities in public life

In the survey, participants were asked about current levels of prejudice against all ethnic minority communities, whilst also comparing this to past trends and future projections. Figure 5.3 presents the perceived levels of prejudice against all ethnic minority groups. Overall, the level of prejudice towards ethnic minorities appears to be declining, with high feelings of prejudice falling from almost 50 per cent in 2005 to 31 per cent in 2012. This is not to say that prejudice is no longer present, but with a trend in respondents feeling that smaller incidences of prejudice are increasing. Encouragingly, an increasing proportion of participants (18 per cent) in the most recent 2012 survey consider there to be hardly any prejudice. It is also significant to note that the most marked change in these trends has occurred after the 2009 survey. These trends are also consistent with perceptions of prejudice when compared to the previous 5 years as illustrated in Figure 5.4, but with a more marked change as indicated by the R^2 regression line with a coefficient of 0.83. From 2005 to 2012, perceptions of 'more prejudice' have fallen from almost 70 per cent to 47 per cent which suggests that the issue of prejudice against ethnic communities is improving.



	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2012
A lot	49	50	44	44	46	40	31
A little	43	40	48	49	48	52	47
Hardly any	7	8	6	7	5	8	18
Don't know	1	2	2	1	1	0	4

Figure 5.3 Prejudice against minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland
(Source: NILT, 2005-2012)



	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2012
More now	68	70	63	53	61	47	41
Less now	6	6	11	18	14	18	17
About the same	19	20	23	27	24	34	35
Don't know	7	4	4	2	1	1	7

Figure 5.4 Levels of prejudice compared to the previous 5 years in Northern Ireland
(Source: NILT, 2005-2012)

Survey participants were questioned on the types of relationships they would accept with migrants from Eastern European countries as illustrated in Figure 5.5.

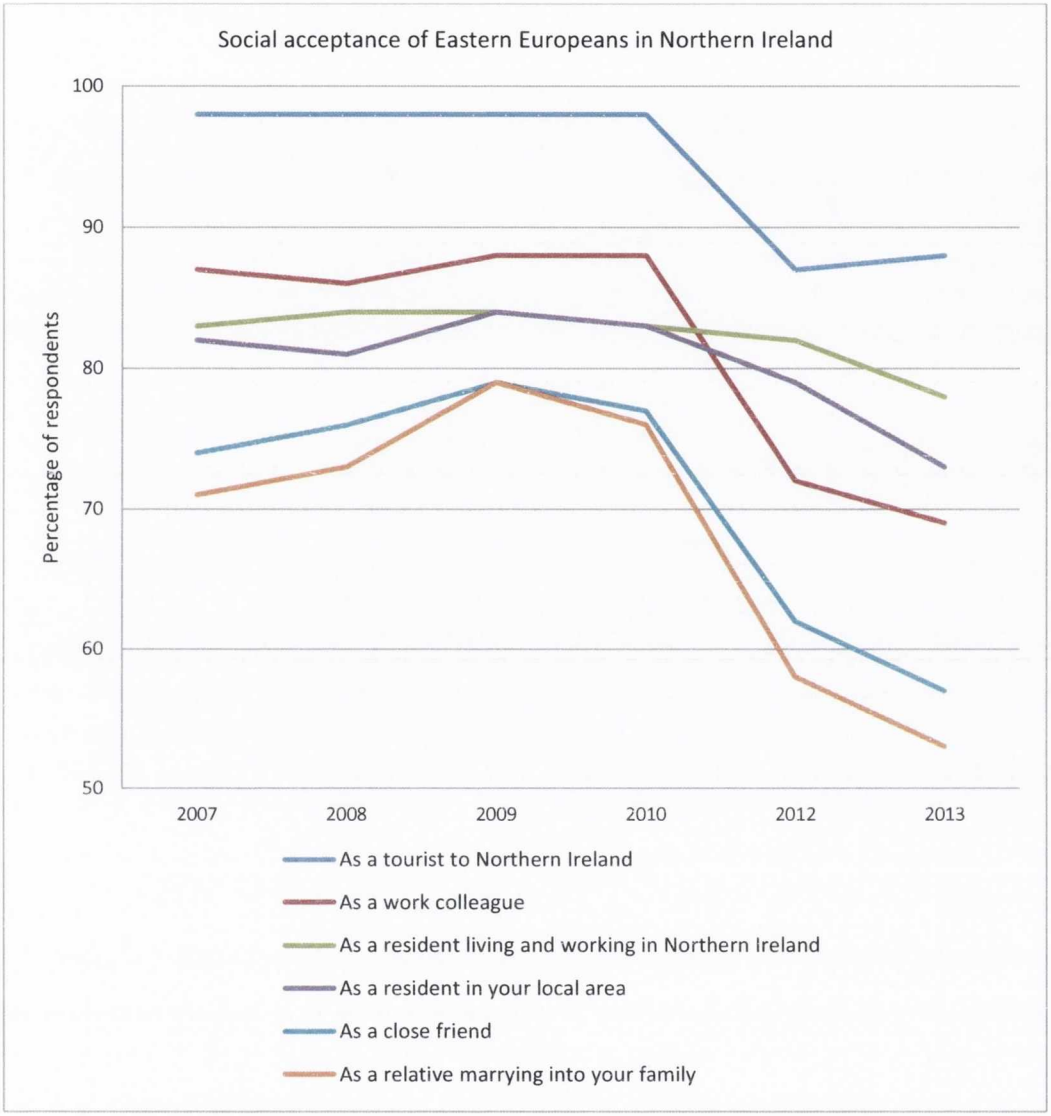


Figure 5.5 Social acceptance of Eastern Europeans in Northern Ireland
(Source: NILT, 2007-2013)

Two key trends are evident in this data. The first is the pronounced dip in attitudes from 2010 to 2013. The second relates to the nature of relationship that would be accepted. In 2013, 88 per cent of respondents would accept Eastern Europeans as tourists to Northern Ireland, but only 53 per cent would accept them as a relative marrying into their family. When analysing the different types of relationships, the percentage of acceptance is progressively lower as the relationship becomes closer. This suggests a degree of distancing and varying levels of tolerance towards Eastern Europeans. These trends raise questions as

to why the local population express such attitudes, especially given the sharp changes in attitudes from 2010.

A recent report outlines how the media, particularly newspapers, play a crucial role in framing migration discourse (Allen and Blinder, 2013). An analysis of migration articles in main UK newspapers 2010-2012 revealed the power language has in portraying migration and migrants in a particular way. Words such as 'flood' and 'influx' were used to describe movements; 'illegal', 'criminals' and 'asylum seekers' to typify the characteristics of migrants; and 'economic', 'jobs' and 'benefits' as common descriptors of the issues migrants bring to receiving societies. Media practices tend to fixate migration as a problematic and negative phenomenon, which then plays a pivotal role in shaping public opinion (King and Wood, 2002; Semotam, 2011). Within the Northern Ireland news press migrants are often a subject of news headlines (Figure 5.6). Although not always portrayed negatively, the media has the power to shape how people think about a particular issue.

Figure 5.6 Migration in the media

Participants were questioned about their perceptions of migrants on several aspects of society in Northern Ireland. Table 5.5 illustrates the percentage of respondents that either agreed or strongly agreed with each of the statements.

Perceptions of migrant workers	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2013
Migrants take jobs that locals do not want	80	77	78	74	74	67
Migrants make NI open to new ideas and cultures	67	68	65	68	69	67
The media taints people's perceptions of migrants	66	66	58	66	63	57
Migrants put a strain on health services	60	65	60	60	59	58
Migrants are good for the economy	52	59	52	51	50	55
Migrants children put a strain on schools	44	55	50	48	49	47
Migrants cause a shortage of local housing	52	50	42	40	39	42
Migrants take jobs from local people	48	42	46	42	43	43
Migrants come to NI to get benefits	28	28	31	32	32	36

Table 5.5 Perceptions of migrant workers in Northern Ireland
(Source: NILT, 2006-2013)

While there are some small variations in perceptions from 2006 to 2013, it is evident that respondents agreed strongly with certain statements. Participants strongly agreed that 'migrants take jobs that locals do not want', but interestingly this variable has witnessed the greatest change, falling from 80 percent in 2006 to 67 per cent in 2013. This could be attributed to the onset of economic recession and increased competition for jobs with the local population and hence a change in attitudes. Considerably fewer respondents thought that migrants come to Northern Ireland to get benefits, put a strain on housing and schools, and take jobs from local people; however these perceptions are still evident among the survey population. These findings therefore present a very mixed picture. For example, even though respondents thought that migrants take jobs that local people don't want, something they view as positive, less identify migrants as contributing to the economy. It appears that even though the majority of communities view migrants as a positive thing in certain aspects, this positivity is not expressed across all sectors of society. This is evidenced further in the most recent 2012 survey. Participants were questioned on whether the number of immigrants should be increased, remain the same, or decreased. Only 10 per cent thought that migrants should be either 'increased a lot' or 'a little'. With 40 per cent believing that numbers should 'stay the same', 19 per cent thought that migrants should be 'reduced a little' and 26 per cent 'reduced a lot'.

In the 2012 survey, participants were asked about their frequency of contact with Eastern Europeans (Table 5.6). Of those that had some form of interaction with these communities

(and including other ethnic groups) they were further questioned on the nature of that contact (Table 5.7). Almost 50 per cent of respondents had little or no contact with Eastern Europeans and out of the remaining respondents only 16 per cent had any contact on a daily basis.

Frequency of contact	Percentage
Daily	16
Once or twice a week	19
Once or twice a month	18
Very rarely	32
Not at all	16

Table 5.6 Frequency of contact with Eastern Europeans (Source: NILT, 2012)

Nature of contact	Percentage
A close interaction such as a lengthy conversation	25
Just a greeting	46
Or something in between	22
Other	3
It depends	1
Don't know	4

Table 5.7 Nature of contact with all minority ethnic groups (Source: NILT, 2012)

When considering the nature of that contact, 46 per cent had contact that was considered 'just a greeting' and with only 25 per cent describing a more close interaction. These findings are indicative of very little involvement with Eastern Europeans and other minority communities.

It is evident that the range in attitudes revealed in the time series data are complex and, at times, contradictory. Although this data should be treated with caution, it reveals unique perspectives on how migration is viewed by the local population. The conceptualisation of structure and agency as presented in Chapter 3 highlighted the importance of everyday interactions to the experiences and life chances of migrant communities. It has been argued previously that structure and agency places too much emphasis on the relationships between organisations and individuals, and without much consideration to the complex organisation of society and the opportunities for agents to interact. Migrant communities navigate not just a regulatory environment, but a host population capable of mediating

their life chances and opportunities and also their capacity to integrate. As this cursory review of the data has shown, the attitudes and behaviours of the host population are mixed. While some are positive and see the value of a more pluralist society, others are negative, especially in a place where sectarianism has shaped both structure and agency. The next section uses principal component analysis to explore sub-sets of social attitudes in Northern Ireland. It shows that the 'habitus' is complicated, but understanding the dynamics between migrants and the host population is important to context, especially for a deeper understanding of the in-depth interviews with both migrants and stakeholder bodies in Chapters 6 and 7. This complexity therefore requires further exploration and analysis.

The Complexity of Social Context and Conditions

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) is a multivariate statistical method of data analysis that aims to reduce the dimensionality of data sets that contain multiple variables and observations. It allows patterns in data to be observed by identifying particular directions that explain most of the data variation. PCA was used to examine 17 variables from the 2012 NILT survey (1204 observations) based on attitudes towards ethnic minority people. The questions listed in Table 5.8 form the variables and focus on issues related to: racial prejudice; the reception of EU migrants in Northern Ireland; the contribution of migrants to Northern Ireland society, economy and culture; and the participation of ethnic minorities in public life.

Rotated Component Matrix[a]					
Variables	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Is there a lot of prejudice against people from minority ethnic communities in NI nowadays?	.113	.100	**.675**	-.090	.119
Generally is there more racial prejudice in NI now than there was 5 years ago, less, or about the same amount?	-.207	-.035	**.789**	-.015	.027
Will there be more, less or about the same amount of racial prejudice in NI in 5 years times compared with now?	-.139	-.050	**.672**	.115	.007
In relation to colour and ethnicity, I prefer to stick with people of my own kind?	-.665	.043	.200	.064	-.240
Thinking of the group that you have most contact with, what type of contact would that be?	**.489**	.006	.340	.205	-.251
Would you describe yourself as very prejudiced against people of minority ethnic communities, a little prejudiced, or not prejudiced at all?	-.550	-.136	.215	.083	-.142
Some people say that if they feel they are prejudiced, they try to overcome their feelings and avoid displaying prejudiced behaviour, do you agree or disagree?	.343	-.076	**.450**	.012	-.171
How welcome is being free to live and work in any other part of the EU to you?	**.747**	.167	.096	-.154	.030
How welcome is the fact that other EU citizens are free to live and work in NI to you?	**.782**	.176	.034	-.147	.006
How good or bad do you think the settlement of migrants in the last ten years has been for NI?	-.124	.012	-.026	**.778**	.092
Is it generally bad or good for NI's economy that migrants come to Northern Ireland from other countries?	-.054	-.045	.080	**.704**	-.014
Is NI's cultural life generally undermined or enriched by migrants coming to live here from other countries?	-.078	.080	-.027	**.809**	.001
Do you agree or disagree that people from minority ethnic communities are less respected in NI than they once were?	-.041	.124	.147	.191	**.796**
Do you agree or disagree that you personally know quite a bit about the culture of some minority ethnic communities living in NI?	.264	.087	-.065	-.083	**.747**
How much do you think that people from minority ethnic communities participate as school governors?	.066	**.861**	-.021	.016	.068
How much do you think that people from minority ethnic communities participate as prominent business people?	.127	**.901**	.006	.004	.052
How much do you think that people from minority ethnic communities participate as commentators in the media on issues concerning minority ethnic communities?	.145	**.875**	-.016	.028	.106
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.					
a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.					

Table 5.8 Component structures of NILT data

On inputting the variables, PCA analyses their connections to each other and produces a component matrix (Table 5.8). This displays the significance of each variable when loaded onto each component, with the figures highlighted in bold (>0.4 significance level) indicating a strong relationship between the variables. In this data set five significant components account for 60 per cent of the data variation, with component 1 (14.6%) explaining the greatest amount of variance and component 5 (8.262%) the least.

Examining the positively correlated variables within each component allows us to make judgements on that population. Each component group was assigned a category that could best describe their outlook towards migrant communities as listed and described below. Appendix 7 also details demographic and socio-economic traits associated with each group.

- Component 1: 'The liberals' (14.6 per cent)
- Component 2: 'The optimists and participators' (14.4 per cent)
- Component 3: 'The prejudiced' (11.6 per cent)
- Component 4: 'The functionalists' (11.2 per cent)
- Component 5: 'The informed prejudiced' (8.2 per cent)

'The liberals'

Component 1 accounts for the greatest variance with high scores pertaining to variables related to the functioning of the EU. They welcome and support the freedom of movement and labour afforded by EU membership, with regards to Northern Ireland residents having the option to live in another part of the EU (.747) and with EU migrants moving to Northern Ireland to live and work (.782). Although to a lesser extent, they are positively correlated with having more social contact with minority groups. This group of people could be classed as 'liberals' in that they are strongly uncorrelated with showing prejudice and do not prefer to 'stick with own people'. Overall, they appear open and accepting of new migration to Northern Ireland.

'The optimists and participators'

Component 2 relates to ethnic communities participation in public life. They regard migrants as being visible in civic life by having a presence as school governors (.861), as prominent business people (.901) and as commentators in the media communicating the issues and concerns of ethnic minority people (.875). This component is negatively

correlated with variables that focus on prejudice. Termed 'optimists and participators', this group tend to have more experience of living outside Northern Ireland and are more likely to be home owners than in the rental sector.

'The prejudiced'

Component 3 corresponds to 'the prejudiced' by showing strong correlations with variables related to past levels of prejudice (.789), present occurrences (.675) and future projections (.672). This group avoids outward expressions of prejudice (.450) but tend to stay within their own ethnic group (.200). It is therefore not surprising to find that this group negatively correlates with variables related to migrants having a positive contribution to Northern Ireland society, economy and culture and with ethnic minorities having little presence in civic life.

'The functionalists'

Component 4 is strongly correlated with variables linked to migrants' contribution to society in Northern Ireland. This group recognises the presence of migrants in Northern Ireland as positive (.778), in contributing to the economy (.704) and enriching cultural life (.809). This component regards migrants as having a functional role, but they do not have much contact with ethnic communities and feel that they are more invisible in public life. This is suggestive that 'functionalists' acknowledge the potential of migrants, but feel that society makes them occupy a marginalised position. Demographically, this group represents a younger cohort of the population, who also have more life experience outside of Northern Ireland. Out of all component groups, they have a higher proportion of being educated to degree level and hold relatively senior employment positions. Although they may have lower than average home ownership and higher rental proportions, this may be reflective of the current market conditions for the younger generation.

'Informed prejudice'

Component 5 correlates highly with the statement that people from minority communities are less respected than previously (.796) and that this group is quite knowledgeable about the culture of these communities (.747). This component shows negative correlations with all other variables, suggesting that they are aware of stereotyping and marginalisation that often taints people's perceptions of migrant communities. The social characteristics of this component group are more mixed than other components. Spread across all age

categories, they are just as likely to have no qualifications or to be educated to a degree level. In terms of employment, while a significant amount hold managerial or intermediate positions, the same amount occupy semi-routine positions.

This analysis complements the presentation of earlier time series data. It is important to stress that these are subjective constructions and are open to interpretation. However the analysis does show that there are multiple perspectives on how the local population conceptualise migrant communities. Although these views may prove contradictory at times, it illustrates the diverse opinions people hold when it comes to migration issues. For example, while local communities may value migrants in an economic sense, they can also show hostility when it comes to sharing resources and accepting migrants as equal individuals in society.

5.5 Summary

This chapter examined the multi-level governance framework in which modern migration occurs. Facilitated by EU enlargement processes, Northern Ireland experienced the arrival of an unprecedented number of A8 and A2 migrants. The principles and policies of the EU provide its citizens with the right to live and work in other Member States. But the responsibility of accommodating EU migrants and effectively managing new migration lies within the legislation and policy frameworks of receiving societies; in this case the UK and the devolved Northern Ireland administration. Migrants have access to rights and resources that should allow them to access opportunities in the same way as local citizens. They are protected by laws, policies and strategies that aim to promote diversity and eliminate discrimination, albeit in ways that could be better streamlined, enforced and monitored.

The chapter also presented the patterns that characterise recent migration to Northern Ireland. It analysed the geographical distribution and used proxies such as country of birth, language competency and newcomer school pupils to examine these trends. Existing knowledge on migrants remains descriptive however, highlighting surface issues and with limited insights into their lived experiences and the wider implications for modern society. This phenomenon requires a deeper understanding of how migration processes are unfolding in Northern Ireland. As identified in Chapter 2, locality and context matter, with Northern Ireland presenting a complex backdrop as a new migration destination. As a society Northern Ireland remains deeply 'divided', raising significant questions on how migrants can become 'integrated'. This chapter started to unpack this complexity by

examining attitudes and perceptions held by the local community. The following chapter will consider migrants' experiences in employment and housing using qualitative interviews and quantitative secondary data.

CHAPTER 6

The Dynamics of Structure and Agency in Regulating Employment and Housing Practices

6.1 Introduction

This chapter, together with Chapter 7, will present the empirical findings of the research through qualitative interviews conducted with migrants and various members of the statutory, community and voluntary sectors in Northern Ireland. Chapters 1 to 4 outlined the rationale, research questions, conceptual framework and methodological design shaping this thesis. Chapter 1 provided the central research question in understanding how the state and civil society respond to and deal with modern migration processes. Chapter 2 addressed how migration has been theorised in academic debate, raising the subject of migrant integration as a continually contested yet much used concept in analysing how migrants may (or may not) become part of a new society. That chapter also reveals the importance of examining integration as a process rather than in terms of outcomes; how migrants are no longer located within traditional migration destinations; and how contemporary migration needs to be examined as a set of complex and multi-layered processes. Chapter 3 outlined the conceptual framework that is proposed as a new avenue in migration research. It also demonstrated how structure and agency are fluid concepts that need to be examined more rigorously through an interpretive approach and using qualitative research methods (Chapter 4).

The previous chapter, Chapter 5, provided both a contextual and an analytical picture of the unusual socio-political backdrop of Northern Ireland as a new migration destination. It also started to unpack how migration is framed; from legislation and policy frameworks to the perspectives held by the local community. The chapter revealed the limits of empiricism in explaining migration processes. By identifying the socially constructed opinions and beliefs that the local community in Northern Ireland express towards migrants and migration, the quantitative data showed some of the complex, varied and contradictory attitudes that prevail within society. Chapter 6 draws further on secondary quantitative data, but it will demonstrate how a quantitative perspective simply skims the surface, limiting insight into how migration processes are played out in society.

The multiplicity of structure and the complexity of agency as examined in Chapter 3 indicate that the dynamics between these concepts is much more complicated and multifaceted than previously understood: structure and agency interact in ways that are not visible and are often arbitrary. Employment and housing are important allocative resources that may provide, challenge or limit migrants' social and economic mobility and so are central to the study. This chapter will examine how migrants source, utilise and apply agency whilst drawing on these resources, and simultaneously how state and civil society structures enable and constrain such actions.

6.2 Revisiting the Theoretical Framework

Structure and agency, as outlined in Chapter 3, provides an abstract yet innovative way of investigating the complex nature of migration. Previous research tends to present structural influences and notions of agency as separate analytical categories, often over-emphasising one concept. Rather than focus on one or the other, this research uses housing and employment to examine the interaction of structure and agency. Each of the five elements of the structuration framework; super-structure; proximate structures; internal structures; practices; and outcomes, have been identified as significant in understanding migration phenomena from a structure-agency perspective. Regarding migration, structures may enable or constrain the decisions and actions of migrants, influencing how migrants may form and apply agency in new societies of immigration. This can be analysed using the structuration framework, where super-structures, proximate structures and internal structures merge through practices and produce outcomes within civil society. The components of this framework are fluid and subjective, with a multitude of environments and settings in which different outcomes emerge. Structure and agency operate on different scales, within various settings, and in social spaces that do not necessarily reflect previous conceptions of social action within rigid macro, meso and micro settings. The need to break away from the notion that (1) structures are simply institutions or formal arrangements within society and (2) agency as an entity that is solely conditioned by agents is a major challenge in structure-agency studies.

6.3 Employment Practices

Employment is a critical allocative resource that is of vital importance for migrants in settling into a new destination. Previous research on migrants and employment focuses on the type of work they become involved in, the difficult working conditions they may encounter and their relative immobility in the labour market. Although these are still problematic areas, they have been well documented in the literature as demonstrated in Chapter 2. This research examined employment, not just as a measurable outcome, but as a process and a practice by which migrants become involved in interacting with and negotiating the many structural arrangements that may challenge their agency in achieving parity of opportunity in the labour market (Alba, 2003). Chapter 5 identified that EU migrants are entitled to take up employment in Northern Ireland in both the private and public sector, with employers having a responsibility to treat migrant applicants, their qualifications and experience on equal par with local applicants. Employment is important not only for financial security, but in contributing to and impacting upon many other life chances for migrants, such as their housing arrangements, their social relations and plans for the future; thus reinforcing how no single issue can be considered in isolation.

Employment and Education: Characteristics and trends

This section contextualises the employment and education profiles of A8 and A2 migrants; regionally across Northern Ireland, with comparisons to the local population, and with reference to the migrant participants in this research. The 30 interviewees in this study migrated to Northern Ireland between 2003 and 2012 from countries including; Poland, Romania, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine and Spain. Migrants ranged in age from 18 to 53, with an average age of 33 and consisted of 18 females and 12 males. Table 6.1 provides a regional breakdown of migrants' economic activity compared to the local population. The data shows that 77 per cent of migrants are in employment[11] compared to 57 per cent of the local population. They are however less likely to be self-employed or full-time students. Although significantly fewer migrants are economically inactive, compared to the native born, this is due to the relatively young demographic cohort of EU migrants.

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[11] Includes: Employed full-time, employed part-time, self-employed full-time and self-employed part-time

Economic activity of local population and migrants from A8 and A2 Countries	NI residents	%	Migrants	%	Difference
All residents 16-74	**1,147,446**		**29,801**		
Economically active	**751,988**	**65.53**	**25,440**	**85.37**	**19.84**
Employed Full-time	397,815	34.67	17,373	58.30	23.63
Employed Part-time	150,828	13.14	4,296	14.42	1.28
Self-employed Full-time	81,148	7.07	803	2.69	-4.38
Self-employed Part-time	23,156	2.02	393	1.32	-0.7
Unemployed	56,108	4.89	1,856	6.23	1.34
Full-time student	42,933	3.74	719	2.41	-1.33
Economically inactive	**395,458**	**34.46**	**4,361**	**14.63**	**-19.83**
Retired	153,691	13.39	195	0.65	-12.74
Student	72,571	6.32	968	3.25	-3.07
Looking after home/family	49,223	4.29	1,573	5.28	0.99
Long term sick/disabled	86,856	7.57	439	1.47	-6.1
Other	33,117	2.89	1,186	3.98	1.09

Table 6.1 Economic activity of local population and migrants from A8 and A2 Countries (Source: Census 2011)

Of the migrants that took part in this research, high rates of economic activity were evident with the majority in either full time (20) or part time (2) employment. Those that were unemployed consisted of; unemployed but actively seeking work (1), unemployed due to health related reasons (1), and homemakers (4) either caring for a family and/or trying to find suitable part-time employment. The study also included one person who owned a business and one school leaver planning to start further education.

Table 6.2 and Table 6.3 examine the employment industry and occupations held by both migrants and the local population in Northern Ireland. The data illustrates how migrants dominate sectors such as manufacturing (29 per cent), retail (15 per cent) and hospitality (12 per cent) and with occupations at the lower end of the scale such as elementary (29 per cent) and unskilled positions (23 per cent). Indeed this is a trend identified across Europe with migrants being more likely to be under-employed, below their ability, than non-migrants (EC, 2009).

Employment industry of local population and migrants from A8 and A2 Countries	NI residents	%	Migrants	%	Difference
All residents 16-74 in employment	**687,643**		**23,483**		
Manufacturing	63,072	9.2	6804	29.0	19.8
Wholesale and retail trade	123,814	18.0	3557	15.1	-2.9
Accommodation, food services activities	33,557	4.9	2756	11.7	6.8
Human health and social work activities	96,793	14.1	1943	8.3	-5.8
Administrative, support service activities	26,731	3.9	1597	6.8	2.9
Construction	59,420	8.6	1486	6.3	-2.3
Education	65,141	9.5	927	3.9	-1.7
Transport and storage	28,114	4.1	786	3.3	-0.8
Other i.e. arts, recreation, service activities	31,663	4.6	727	3.1	-1.5
Professional, scientific and technical	31,390	4.6	602	2.6	-2.0
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	16,471	2.4	563	2.4	0
Water/waste management, remediation	4,779	0.7	505	2.2	1.5
Public administration and defence	55,523	8.1	480	2.0	-6.1
Information and communication	16,698	2.4	288	1.2	-1.2
Financial and insurance activities	22,870	3.3	266	1.1	-2.2
Real estate activities	6,671	1.0	94	0.4	-0.6
Mining and quarrying	1,767	0.3	63	0.3	0
Electricity and gas supply	3,169	0.5	39	0.2	-0.3

Table 6.2 Employment industry of local population and migrants from A8 and A2 Countries in Northern Ireland (Source: Census 2011)

Occupation of local population and migrants from A8 and A2 Countries	NI residents	%	Migrants	%	Difference
All residents 16-74 in employment	**687,643**		**23,483**		
Elementary	70,812	10.3	6,710	28.6	18.3
Process, plant and machine operatives	52,421	7.6	5,280	22.5	14.9
Skilled trades	99,166	14.4	4,118	17.5	3.1
Caring, leisure and other services	64,631	9.4	1,715	7.3	-2.1
Sales and customer service	71,147	10.3	1,530	6.5	-3.8
Professional	115,517	16.8	1,418	6.0	-10.8
Administrative and secretarial	100,100	14.6	1,051	4.5	-10.1
Associate professional and technical	58,259	8.5	999	4.2	-4.3
Managers, directors and senior officials	55,590	8.1	662	2.8	-5.3

Table 6.3 Occupations of local population and migrants from A8 and A2 Countries in Northern Ireland (Source: Census 2011)

These regional trends are reflected in the employment positions of migrants in this research. Migrants were dominant in sectors including; meat processing, manufacturing and production; service positions including catering, hospitality and cleaning; basic administration work; and in the informal sector i.e. casual work. Migrants' employment occupations in their home countries included: construction and manufacturing;

administration; marketing and management; service occupations; and self-employment. A trend is evident with migrants taking up lower skilled positions in Northern Ireland compared to their previous employment, for example, from management positions to jobs in cleaning and food processing. Given migrants' high education backgrounds, employment positions in both their home country and Northern Ireland also tended to be below their qualification level.

Table 6.4 examines the education backgrounds of migrants. Compared to the local population, migrants are less likely to have no qualifications or qualifications at a lower level. However, the most striking figure in this table identifies 41 per cent of migrants with 'other qualifications'. This category refers to experience related to employment, qualifications obtained outside the UK, or uncertainty around qualification equivalents. This suggests that migrants are unsure of the relevance of their qualifications in Northern Ireland and that the Qualification Equivalency service provided by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) is not being implemented.

Highest level of qualifications of local population and migrants from A8 and A2 Countries (aged 16 and over)	**NI residents**	**%**	**Migrants**	**%**	**Difference**
All residents aged 16+	**1,431,540**		**29,867**		
No qualifications	416,851	29.1	5,058	16.9	-12.2
Level 1: 1-4 GCSEs, Foundation diploma	164,798	11.5	2,126	7.1	-4.4
Level 2: 5+ GCSEs, Intermediate diploma	213,570	15.0	2,445	8.2	-6.8
Apprenticeship	60,462	4.2	439	1.5	-2.7
Level 3: A Levels, Advanced diploma	176,110	12.3	1,979	6.6	-5.7
Level 4 and above: Degree, Higher diploma, Professional qualifications	338,544	23.6	5,474	18.3	-5.3
Other qualifications: Vocational, work related, gained outside the UK and not known/stated	61,205	4.3	12,346	41.3	37.0

Table 6.4 Highest level of qualifications of local population and migrants from A8 and A2 Countries (Source: Census 2011)

In this study, migrants' education profiles showed some variation but with two key categories; those educated to degree level and those with school level qualifications. Although half of migrants in the research held a degree or diploma qualification, this was not being utilised either before migration or currently in Northern Ireland.

Migrant Participant Profiles

The previous section demonstrates how migrants to Northern Ireland tend to be well educated and in employment. Earlier evidence also suggests that migrants are in employment positions well below their qualification level and bring a host of skills and expertise that remains untapped (McAreavey, 2012; Irwin, McAreavey et al., 2014). Table 6.5 outlines the demographic, education and employment characteristics of the migrant participants in this research, alongside the case study area they were recruited in and the names or anonymous identifiers that will be used in the empirical analysis. This table also provides detail on migrants English language competency, which ranged from fluent (14), good (5), basic (6) and none (5). It outlines migrants' current housing tenure in Northern Ireland, the subject of the later part of this chapter. Table 6.6 moves on to further scrutinise migrants' qualification and occupation background by comparing it with their home country employment, and their current or most recent employment in Northern Ireland. These tables set out an important context for understanding the employment and housing experiences of migrants in this research.

Name (Anonymous*)	Year of migration	Origin country	Age	Gender	Case study	Interpreter assistance	English language level	Employment status	Highest level of qualification	Housing tenure
A1*	2003	Spain	52	M	B		Basic	Unemployed (health reasons)	-	Social
Marina	2003	Ukraine	32	F	A		Fluent	Part-time	Degree	Social
A2*	2004	Lithuania	-	F	A		Fluent	Owns coffee shop business	-	PRS
Richard	2005	Poland	48	M	A		Fluent	Full-time	-	Social
A3*	2005	Poland	39	M	B	✓	None	Full-time	Secondary school	Social
Olga	2005	Poland	32	F	A		Fluent	Full-time	Degree	Homeowner
Joanna	2006	Poland	25	F	A		Fluent	Full-time	Degree	Homeowner
A4*	2006	Poland	35	M	A		Fluent	Full-time	Secondary school	Homeowner
A5*	2006	Romania	-	F	B		Fluent	Full-time	Degree	PRS
Aleksandra	2006	Poland	33	F	A		Good	Unemployed (homemaker)	Secondary school	Homeowner
Mikolaj	2006	Poland	31	M	B		Fluent	Full-time	Vocational school	PRS
Beata	2007	Poland	33	F	A	✓	None	Full-time	Vocational school	Social
A6*	2007	Poland	18	F	A		Fluent	Student	-	Social
Anna	2007	Poland	30	F	A		Fluent	Full-time	Degree	PRS
Marte	2007	Poland	31	F	A	✓	None	Maternity leave (PT)	Degree	PRS
Annetta	2007	Poland	32	F	B	✓	Basic	Part-time	-	PRS
Robert	2007	Poland	-	M	B	✓	Basic	Full-time	-	PRS
Danuta	2007	Poland	35	F	B		Fluent	Unemployed (homemaker), volunteer	-	Social
A7*	2008	Poland	39	F	B	✓	Basic	Part-time	Secondary school	PRS
Roman	2009	Latvia	36	M	A		Fluent	Unemployed	Degree	PRS
A8*	2009	Poland	37	F	A	✓	None	Unemployed (homemaker)	-	Homeowner
A9*	2009	Poland	29	F	B	✓	Basic	Unemployed (homemaker)	Secondary school	PRS
Tomasz	2010	Poland	32	M	B		Good	Full-time	Secondary school	PRS
A10*	2010	Poland	53	M	B	✓	None	Full-time	-	PRS
Luxandra	2010	Romania	34	F	B		Fluent	Part-time	Degree	PRS
A11*	2011	Poland	32	M	B		Good	Full-time	Degree	PRS
Pocreata	2011	Romania	32	M	B		Good	Full-time	Vocational school	PRS
Gosha	2011	Poland	20	F	B	✓	Basic	Full-time	Secondary school	PRS
Andreia	2011	Romania	27	F	B		Fluent	Full-time	Degree	PRS
Pavel	2012	Romania	31	M	B		Good	Full-time	Degree	PRS

Table 6.5 Profiles of migrant research participants

Name (Anonymous*)	Occupation/ qualification background	Employment in home country	Current employment in Northern Ireland
A1*	-	-	-
Marina	Economics degree Interpreting course in NI	-	Self-employed fitness instructor
A2*	-	-	Owns coffee shop
Richard	-	-	Car manufacturing production line
A3*	Secondary level education	Building / construction	Steel production operator
Olga	Masters degree in economics	-	Local migrant advocacy group *Husband works in local factory*
Joanna	Business degree (in progress)	Marketing	Local migrant advocacy group
A4*	Semi-skilled employment	Manufacturing	Manufacturing
A5*	Law degree	Security	Health Service
Aleksandra	Secondary level education	Administration,	No employment history in NI *Husband works for printing company*
Mikolaj	Vocational school - technical economics trade qualification	Printing company, building trade	Diary factory *Wife works as canteen assistant in local school*
Beata	Vocational school	Managing a shop	Cleaning supervisor
A6*	Migrated during secondary school	*Mother owned second-hand clothes shop*	Continuing to further education
Anna	Master's degree in international tourism	Call centre, hotel	Transport administration
Marte	Economics degree	-	Supervisory assistant in school and shop cleaner
Annetta	-	-	Meat processing factory
Robert	-	-	Meat processing factory
Danuta	-	-	Volunteer for local community organisation and pre-school
A7*	Secondary level education	Dressmaker	Office cleaner
Roman	Degree	Management position	Unemployed through redundancy
A8*	-	-	No employment history in NI
A9*	Secondary level education	Marketing and selling	Unemployed – caring for family
Tomasz	Secondary level education	Lorry driver, joiner	Manufacturing
A10*	-	Advertisement designer and marketing	Chicken processing factory *Wife works for company collecting second-hand clothing*
Luxandra	Degree in International Relationships and European Studies	-	Cleaning in shopping centres
A11*	Degree in Tourism, Recreation and Management	-	Meat processing factory
Pocreata	Vocational school chef qualification	Retail job	Fast food restaurant *Wife works as hotel dishwasher and cleaner*
Gosha	Secondary level education	Student	Chicken processing factory and fast food restaurant
Andreia	Degree in community work	Care assistant	Care home assistant *Husband works in airline catering*
Pavel	Degree and two diplomas, Electrical Engineering, Computer Science and Management	Deputy manager in a hypermarket	Fast food delivery driver

Table 6.6 Migrants' education and employment profiles

This section has shown the high rate and quick uptake of employment amongst A8 and A2 migrants in Northern Ireland. However despite high levels of education and extensive work experience many migrants are working below their skills levels (Table 6.6).

Accessing Employment: Structural insertion and the limits of agency

This section examines the extent to which migrants are able to exert agency within the labour market by considering how they access employment. The reasons why migrants leave their home country are often complex and not the result of one determining factor, for instance EU expansion, globalisation, and personal ambitions such as the desire to develop language skills may play a role. Indeed research participants cited lack of employment, economic instability and a search for higher standards of living as being important factors in their decision to move:

> "Because there was no employment in Poland at that stage and we had huge financial problems. The only reason was financial problems... He (Olga's husband) was self-employed for several years but instead of income it was only losses. We were in some debts so the only way for us at that stage was to move abroad...I had no choice, I had to join my husband because he came here first just to find employment and we didn't plan to stay here for a long period of time." (Olga, Poland, CBA)

> "Money, better money, better work and a better life. Actually it was just everything about money and a better job!" (Danuta, Poland, CSB)

Other migrants demonstrate personal choice and mobility in their decision to migrate in order to fulfil life aspirations:

> "Sometimes people want to be independent and to do things on their own. It was the same thing when my family moved to Italy and when I came here; I just wanted to be on my own. I cannot say that I was forced to stay here or in Romania. It's just a choice of a different life." (Andreia, Romania, CSB)

> "First to see what it is like to live abroad, second to learn English and third to get some money to open his own business in Poland." (A11, Poland, CSB)

Some of these reasons are the result of migrants being unable to fulfil life goals in their home country. In other instances, migration is more of a 'rite of passage'; a normal process whereby migrants desire to gain experience abroad and develop language skills. These reasons demonstrate the tensions and dynamics between structure and agency. Migrants have a degree of agency afforded, albeit within the structures of the EU. But this is not the full story as other factors additional to the EU also shape migration patterns. In many cases larger economic forces, facilitated by EU structures, were at play:

> "I didn't ask for a job in Northern Ireland, or even somewhere in the UK...I applied through the agency in Poland, not here. A few days later a girl from the Job Centre phoned me and said 'I have a job for you...you are going to Northern Ireland'." (Richard, Poland, CSA)

> "It wasn't for any reason [why I choose Northern Ireland], it was just like an accident. He was looking for a job through the agency and they offered him a job here. So it was a bit like an accident, he didn't have to choose. It was for short term employment." (A3 via interpreter, Poland, CSB)

> "No reason, it was just the first option that I found." (A5, Romania, CSB)

Indeed these structural factors meant that no migrants, in this study, purposefully choose Northern Ireland as their new destination. There were two main routes through which migrants relocated to Northern Ireland: through pre-arranged employment or through links established by previous migrants:

> "There was a family connection where one person came over. [Her] husband's brother came over first and then they came over." (A9 via interpreter, Poland, CSB)

Recruitment agencies, employers operating across both origin and destination countries, and the dense networks established by previous migrants, all helped to channel these movements. Macro-structures can both simultaneously enable and constrain migrant agency: they afford individual agency in allowing movement but they place limits on the extent of this agency in that they impose boundaries. Migrants can only make decisions and avail of certain choices within the confines of these structures. The ability of migrants to achieve their ambitions via employment experiences will be examined throughout this chapter.

Migrant employment networks have established a system in which migrants access jobs as they are guided in certain directions. This system appears to preclude migrants from accessing all aspects of the labour market, as they are streamlined to certain sectors and are concentrated across just a number of companies. These positions are accessed using both informal and semi-formal methods. Migrants use recommendations from co-ethnics and via casual networks, which in some cases can lead to unregulated employment. Recruitment agencies however tend to play a prominent role. Migrants are also able to access jobs through more formal application processes that match their qualifications and experience. This method is less common than the other routes and has a lower success rate.

Despite the majority of migrants in this study feeling that they have to accept a low paid unskilled position initially, some migrate with an ambition to utilise their qualifications and experience immediately. It could be argued that these migrants have high levels of potential agency evidenced through their employment and education backgrounds, and given the opportunities offered through the EU labour market. However their ability to exercise such agency (or alternatively 'who' allows them to use agency) is tested and constrained by certain structural arrangements and barriers. Andreia's case demonstrates how direct access to the labour market is hindered by prospective employers failing to recognise employment history, relevant experience and qualifications. Andreia's experience illustrates that even though migrants relocate with potential agency to take up employment, accessing employment that matches their education and skills is impeded by more deep-seated structural barriers.

> "Honestly I thought it would have been easier than it was. I had difficulty in finding a job; my work experience was not seen very well here, like none. What I had it didn't seem to matter too much. Everywhere I was asked if I had experience in the UK or here (Northern Ireland). I found it hard that people don't understand what I did before. I studied in Italy but it's just not enough. Now I am with a recruitment agency (since migrating 2 years ago) because everyone was scared of employing me." (Andreia, Romania, CSB)

This raises questions of why her education and employment experience were not recognised and the possible ramifications on migrants' labour market mobility more widely. This is paradoxical as legislation stipulates that equality of opportunity must be exercised

and EU legislation demands economic mobility of its citizens. Effectively migrants are excluded from the full range of opportunities in the labour market.

In addition to talking about a perception of different treatment between migrants and local people in recruitment processes, Andreia described how the very structures that are supposed to facilitate the recognition of education/qualification equivalents are proving ineffective:

> "It cost almost £400 (translating documents related to my qualifications and experience as a Care Assistant). I have a director of community diploma from university, it was at an advanced level but I was very unhappy with the compatibility that they did. So people don't know who I am and what I have got in that area. It feels like they don't want to give you an advantage over other people, or local people." (Andreia, Romania, CSB)

Andreia felt forced back into finding employment through a recruitment agency, where she perceives employment options as being limited by the power of recruitment agents in controlling her access to employment opportunities. The power and control exerted by recruitment agents was illustrated on many occasions:

> "I used to work for the recruitment agency [name of company]. This is right, some [qualifications] were not accepted, but if you had it translated some companies would accept them." (Joanna, Poland, CSA)

Recruitment agents are influential in that they limit the type of opportunities that are promoted to migrants. But also significant is the apparent lack of consistency that Joanna experienced whereby migrants' success in getting qualifications and experience recognised is very much dependant on the individuals who deal with such cases at a micro level.

Olga outlines a similar situation where declaring qualifications to potential employers, even for an unskilled position, is unlikely to result in employment. Olga initially sees her qualifications as being 'too high' as prospective employers block her access to employment. This research revealed how she and others applied agency in creative ways by taking actions to mask their potential, so that they could secure some type of employment however limited that may be:

> "For one year (I could not find employment). It was because of my qualifications. They were too high to get a job here. I have a master degree in economics...but I wanted a job anywhere, doing anything, in a factory or doing cleaning. I wasn't looking for a job in an office or somewhere like that. But when I put on my CV that I had a master degree, you know...they didn't want a cleaner with a master degree. When I stopped writing in my CV that I had a master degree I got a job like that (clicks fingers) in [local supermarket]." (Olga, Polish, CSA)

These cases illustrate how migrants are immobilised within the labour market, forcing some to adopt strategies to find a job. Not all migrants have this degree of agency however, as they do not have the knowledge or experience that allows them to negotiate and navigate the boundaries to employment:

> "There are many jobs we can't get because of the language barrier and qualifications. Some qualifications from Poland are not accepted here...I'm a qualified technician but I can't show my certificate here. I can do many jobs but I don't have the certificate to get another job. So again, this is not true that we are taking jobs. There are many jobs that we can't get." (Richard, Poland, CSA)

> "(Employers) will choose someone who is the best in a number of categories. So especially if you are not a native speaker of English it's complicated to apply for sales positions when you need to sell to local people or within the UK. They will still employ a native speaker." (Roman, Latvia, CSA)

It is evident that migrants perceive employment structures in Northern Ireland as actively discriminatory as they are considered to favour local education, knowledge and work related experience. This suggests that prejudices held by the local population contribute to structural barriers and limit agency within the labour market. The categorisation of 'migrant jobs' has become engrained into the mind-sets of migrants and employers alike, and within society more generally, with these practices serving to reinforce and sustain labour market segmentation.

Workplace Practices: Exercising agency in employment

Once in employment migrants express a level of contentment by simply finding a job. However, it is clear that their capabilities and aspirations go beyond this level of satisfaction. Securing employment should allow migrants to gain skills, experience and resources to progress further. But it is not just about economic participation in a new society; the workplace can also influence migrants' social and cultural integration.

In the workplace there was evidence to suggest that employment structures inherently discriminate against migrants. Once placed in low skilled and poor paid employment migrants' agency is severely tested, either in trying to achieve mobility within their current employment or in finding a route out of an employment trap. Their agency is determined by several factors including: the structure and composition of the workplace (i.e. the proportion and positions of migrant employees), relationships with employers and fellow employees, ability to seek employment, equality and career advice, and access to support and development resources such as language and personal development. These factors are often interrelated as discussed below.

Some migrants articulated a belief that only certain sectors of the labour market are open to them. This conclusion seems to stem from inequalities experienced in the workplace and also from their minority status, their inadequate English language skills and their lack of local knowledge:

> "Only in the workplace he can notice that the Polish and Slovakian people have the most heavy and difficult work. It's more difficult than the people who are originally from here...maybe it's not really discrimination taking place; its more like a system were cultures maybe prefer different jobs...maybe because people from abroad are more flexible to take difficult or different jobs." (A11 via interpreter, Poland, CSB)

This Polish interviewee evidently believes that he will not be able to obtain a job that is not typically associated as being a 'migrant job'. Such a view reflects a perception that it is outside of migrants' power and control. As this becomes engrained within that community it curtails migrants' agency more generally – in other words it becomes part of the structure. These unwritten rules around job allocation have become so powerful that in some cases migrants either give up seeking jobs in their preferred employment sector or accept that further progression will not be possible. There was evidence that learning

English language is considered not important by migrants. They feel that it would bring no additional opportunities as they will not be afforded the same level of parity as a local person. The example above is indicative of discriminatory structures that are becoming engrained and legitimised in work place practices, where differential treatment is perceived as 'not really discrimination' but more about cultural differences or preferences. This also highlights internalised power relations within the workplace and between employers and employees.

These power relations are further evident in Mikolaj's case where he is one of four migrant employees. Although he is relatively content with his low status job, he describes his presence in the workplace as silent and marginal, believing that keeping silent is better than articulating his opinions:

> "You can say your opinion but sometimes your opinion will work against you. Sometimes it is just better to do your job and don't complain about it. I'm not complaining about my work but even if I make a suggestion to change something so that it is better, they will not listen to me, to my opinion. So I just do my job, do what they want and as long as I am earning money I am happy enough." (Mikolaj, Poland, CSB)

Mikolaj's perception of differences between local and migrant employees is important for migrants' integration into the workplace. Mikolaj consciously made a decision to distance himself in the workplace to avoid potential tensions, whereby he makes links between local employees, their identity and belonging to particular communities:

> "I have a Turkish friend and two Polish friends from work but not local...they do speak with me and we have some conversation but people there (in work)...they come from the one community, from one side of the city, like [a Protestant housing estate]. They slabber a lot about each other and...it's just not for me. I am just part of the staff but I don't want to be a part of those communities. I don't want to have friends like that....they are always talking about each other. I just give up; I am just doing my job and that's it." (Mikolaj, Poland, CSB)

These types of practices and workplace relations constrain migrants from becoming socially integrated into their employment environment. Migrants also use the workplace to accumulate knowledge that affect their housing decisions and influence how they spend

their free time. As Tomasz describes, they feel limited by their housing location in several ways, recognising that there are other places that may afford greater opportunities:

> "When we go outside we try to go outside [CSB] because there are so many beautiful places. It is better than [CSB]. If we could choose between [CSB] and some other place [to live], we would go to another place." (Tomasz, Poland, CSB)

Migrants regard employment situations as a constraint on their opportunities to gain experience and skills. This is manifested through the limited communication channels in the workplace, mainly through the promotion of migrants to multilingual supervisors and the subsequent lack of support in English language acquisition by employers:

> "I think the problem that all migrants have is the language barrier. It was hard, especially in the factory where you don't have many local people. You have Polish, Slovakian and the English is quite basic. It is not a place for communicating it was just for work." (A5, Romania, CSB)

This refers back to the structure and composition of the workplace. Whilst migrant supervisors help broker agency in the workplace, it simultaneously constrains migrants as they do not need to learn English for the workplace, nor do they develop English language skills. This is not always a result of migrants' unwillingness to learn English, but can emerge due to the lack of support from employers. Employers therefore normalise this type of employment structure. Work practices and culture can discourage and hamper the development of English language skills. This lack of language proficiency can cause particular frictions for those who are heavily reliant on others both within and outside of employment:

> "There are a few people that I know that have a little English. They work in a job where the supervisor has the same nationality and has a good level of English. So if anything happens they go to the supervisor and speak in their own language. So they (the employer) don't have to call and pay for any interpreter. So they can hire someone who has zero English. Why would they need to know English when you have someone to interpret to them? They bring you in and say 'No English, that's ok'. They bring in the supervisor and say 'explain to this person that they need to press this button and then this one and so on'. To me this is really mad, this is terrible." (Marina, Ukraine, CSA)

In addition to poor language support from employers, migrants speak of other factors that limit their agency in the workplace. They reported differential treatment as compared to local employees and some highlighted how they feel that they have no voice or capacity to challenge employers on these issues:

> "There were some incidents when Kasia felt treated differently...at work, the Polish people were treated worse than the other nationalities...in Kasia's work place there were a lot of small incidents but you can notice them. For example the people from Northern Ireland could take longer breaks and they (Polish employees) were pushed to come back to work after a certain time. Financially as well because the Polish people never got a bonus and the Irish people did." (A9 via interpreter, Poland, CSB)

Although there are mechanisms to challenge poor employment practices, many migrants are either unaware or choose not to raise such issues. They believe that doing so could lead to further negative treatment or, at worst, losing their job. Even if individuals know how to seek advice, they have little faith in policies and processes implementing equality. Two different scenarios present contrasting perceptions and experiences of migrants' getting involved with agents who can help in these circumstances, which subsequently affect their ability to overcome workplace inequality:

> "Don't ask, even if you are sick you get a warning. I am part-time but before Christmas we were working 12 hours every day, 6 days per week. If you don't do the overtime you will lose your job. They say it is overtime but it is not voluntary and there is no extra money for overtime...I don't want to go to the union because you have to pay and they are doing nothing." (Annetta, Poland, CSB)

> "The type of work was so physical and I was not used to that, so I got involved with the union. I worked on the timing belt where you tie birds all day and it was hard. After one or two months I got sore hands, but they wouldn't believe you and didn't want to change your job and said that the only choice was to go back to Romania. So I joined the union and the union fought for me and changed my job. I think people are afraid to ask for help. There was a girl in the factory who was in the union and I found this out. So I went and asked her for help, even with my basic English." (A5, Romania, CSB)

These examples demonstrate that agency in the workplace is contingent on a range of factors including migrants' personal confidence, their knowledge of the system and on their personal contacts and networks. Without having the power to access and accumulate such resources, the workplace becomes a setting in which migrants constantly face different situations that may both enable and constrain their ability to achieve equality and mobility in employment.

Determining Employment Mobility

This chapter has shown how employment rates of migrants are high and that they occupy specific employment niches. There are also large contrasts in the number of jobs they have held. Some migrants have remained with a single employer since arriving in Northern Ireland, while others have worked for multiple employers with up to six different positions within a six to eight year period. Table 6.7 monitors migrants' employment histories. Despite considerable movement between jobs, there was little evidence to suggest that migrants are moving vertically to higher skilled and better-paid positions, or to employment that matches their qualifications, training or experience.

Name (Anonymous*)	Migrant employment histories: Past to present					
A1*	Factory production	Unemployed				
Marina	Fitness instructor at local gym	Local supermarket	Self-employed fitness instructor			
A2*	Delivering leaflets and clothes collection charity	Dry cleaners	Office job	Factory job	Local supermarket	Owns coffee shop
Richard	DIY casual work	Car manufacturing production line				
A3*	Meat processing factory	Loading lorries	Steel production operator			
Olga	Unemployed for 1 year	Temporary jobs through recruitment agency	Local supermarket	Local migrant advocacy group		
Joanna	Restaurant waitress	Office job	Local migrant advocacy group			
A4*	Fast food restaurant	Manufacturing				
A5*	Meat processing factory	Nursery assistant	Local supermarket	Civil Service	Health Service	
Aleksandra	No employment history in NI					
Mikolaj	Diary factory					
Beata	Periods of unemployment	Various cleaning jobs	Cleaning supervisor			
A6*	Continuing to further education					
Anna	House-keeping in a hotel	Office job in bank	Transport administration			
Marte	School supervisory assistant and;	Shop cleaner				
Annetta	Meat processing factory					
Robert	Meat processing factory					
Danuta	Packaging job	Period of unemployment	Part time/casual kitchen assistant	Pre-school volunteer	Local community group volunteer	
A7*	Dishwasher in a restaurant	Office cleaner				
Roman	Marketing in a shopping centre	Call centre technical support	Account executive in a sales company (made redundant)	Unemployed		
A8*	No employment history in NI					
A9*	Meat processing factory	Cares for children at home				
Tomasz	Manufacturing					
A10*	Chicken processing factory					
Luxandra	Temporary job in chicken processing factory	Cleaning jobs in shopping centres				
A11*	Packaging in a factory	Meat processing factory				
Pocreata	Hotel dishwasher/kitchen assistant	Fast food restaurant				
Gosha	Chicken processing factory and;	Fast food restaurant				
Andreia	Cleaning jobs	Care home assistant				
Pavel	Fast food delivery driver					

Table 6.7 Migrants' employment histories

Having uncovered the characteristic employment profiles of migrants and addressed the ways in which their agency is enabled or constrained in accessing employment, this section examines if and how migrants can move upwards within the labour market. Specific reasons for wanting to change jobs were to escape mundane low paid positions, to utilise or seek new skills and experience, and to secure a more stable future. It should be noted that some migrants initially expressed little desire to improve their employment prospects. However, when questioned further they described how they felt compelled to remain in their current employment as they believed that their aspirations were unattainable.

As indicated above, many migrants aspire to have a different job and indeed are willing to move relatively often in search of better employment. However, migrants' perception of their ideal job differs quite significantly to their actual job, which tends to be of lower status. This differential is partially explained by migrants' previous employment experiences and the influences of networks and employment structures in controlling job mobility. The experience, and hence belief, of this structure has impeded migrants from applying for certain, often more senior, positions:

> "He would prefer to have a job like his previous job in Poland. But for now he would prefer to have a quiet job, and maybe this is why there is no strong motivation to learn English. But he is happy not to have to worry about work and just be happy to have this job now." (A10 via interpreter, Poland, CSB)

Only four interviewees had secured positions where they were able to realise and apply agency more effectively than others, although not all of their skills and qualifications were necessarily in use. There did not appear to be a pattern to explain this. Instead a mix of factors were identified as being important: the support from other people (migrants and non-migrants), accumulating knowledge of the system, personal confidence, and support from NGOs, has culminated in producing more successful outcomes.

Networks undoubtedly help migrants to share information such as job opportunities with their co-ethnics. As well as these positive effects, there are also indications that attachment to certain networks is constraining. Limited skills and access to other resources within networks curtails opportunities and hence migrants' ability to exercise agency:

> "If you have friends they can help you find good work here. But my friend left [chicken processing factory] to work for the company that collects clothes for Africa, but that was worse. She then resigned from that job and was looking for another job for half a year. After that she went back to [chicken processing factory] again. It is terrible...it's all because of the language. Part-time work is easier to find than full-time and then you can join them together." (Gosha, Poland, CSB)

This suggests that the make-up or constitution of such networks i.e. how they are formed and what information, knowledge, people and resources are attached to them, work in a way that either facilitates or limits agency. Two examples in this research hint towards 'who' migrants meet in networks and how the types of resources, opportunities and knowledge that they are able to avail of, have a significant influence on their social and economic ability. This is exemplified through the case of Olga, who was working for a migrant advocacy organisation in CSA:

> "From the beginning it was voluntary work that I was doing. Then this community organisation [local social enterprise/community partnership] started organising English classes for people living around here. My level of English was a bit higher than those in the classes. I helped them with different translations and then they would ask me for help. It was always around this community organisation and then I was offered the job." (Olga, Poland, CSA)

A young Romanian woman's account reveals how she managed to gain upward mobility within the labour market through self-determination, with little involvement of state assistance and through finding vital connections outside of her 'own community' and via a local NGO:

> "I went for one year (to an English class). I finished with [chicken processing factory] and got a job in a nursery. After that I was working in [local supermarket], then I worked in the Civil Service and now I work in the Health Service. You really need to push yourself...when you can't use your qualifications from Romania. You really need to learn the local language to feel comfortable and secure. Even to apply for different services like getting a car, a mortgage, insurance...you really need to push yourself and learn the system, try to get in touch with local people and get a lot of friends and see the reality. If you live in your community you will see the breakdown between minority and local communities. Minority communities are still missing a lot of information and don't have the knowledge to

> access a lot of services. You have to start to extend your networks through communication...through [my son's] school I have a class, I teach theatre and drama every Tuesday... (I got involved in this) through Cheryl, who put me in contact with [representative of local NGO in CSB]." (A5, Romania, CSB)

Her story illustrates the significance of structures as obstacles: not being able to use qualifications to gain employment, difficulty accessing key services and having to 'learn the system'. She identifies how this would not have been possible without branching out and tapping into different resources. It was only through this process that this interviewee enabled her agency. Despite some migrants being able to gain greater levels of social and economic mobility than others, they perceive obstacles to their fuller integration. They believe that only a certain level of progression is possible and ultimately they are constrained by more macro structures within society.

6.4 Housing Practices

Securing access to housing is another critical aspect of migrants' settlement in a new destination, and in addition to employment, it can be considered another type of allocative resource for migrants to draw upon. Previous studies have documented the types of problems migrants' encounter and include poor quality housing, high rents and difficult landlord relationships. These issues remain important, but the arrangement and delivery of housing resources together with migrants' ability to navigate housing structures is a much more complex process. This includes the process of understanding the housing market, identifying a suitable location, accessing housing and making decisions on future housing arrangements. Housing may be viewed as a material resource but also includes the presence and power of authoritative resources. Furthermore in a place like Northern Ireland, housing patterns are embedded within other issues linked to community, culture and identity. This part of the chapter will examine the choices and decisions of migrants in navigating the housing market.

Migrant Housing Patterns: Characteristics and trends

First, an overview of the characteristics and trends of migrants in the housing sector will be analysed, before moving on to examine how they manage different housing scenarios. In both case study areas migrants occupied various housing tenures including: the private rental sector, social housing and home ownership. Renting privately from landlords (18) was most common, followed by smaller numbers in social housing (7) and those who had purchased a home (5). These findings are concurrent with regional trends in migrant housing patterns as presented in Table 6.8, which also examines each sector regionally across Northern Ireland and with comparisons to the local born population.

Housing tenure in Northern Ireland (NI) and tenure of A8 and A2 migrants

Tenure	Total dwellings (occupied)	%	NI born residents	%	A8 and A2 migrants	%
	731,400		**1,590,852**		**35,610**	
Owner occupied	489,900	67	1,178,807	74	5579	16
Social housing	118,600	16	199,765	13	2954	8
Private rental sector	122,900	17	212,280	13	27,077	76

Table 6.8 Housing tenure in Northern Ireland and tenure of A8 and A2 migrants
(Source: Census, 2011 and DSD, 2013)

Figures 6.1 and 6.2 illustrate the breakdown in housing tenure in Northern Ireland and amongst A8 and A2 migrants.

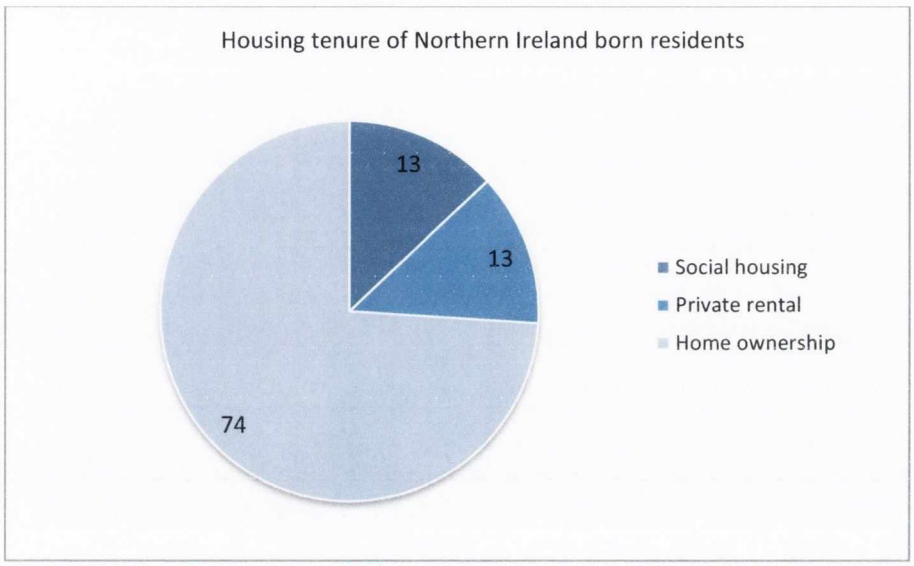

Figure 6.1 Housing tenure of Northern Ireland born residents (Source: Census, 2011)

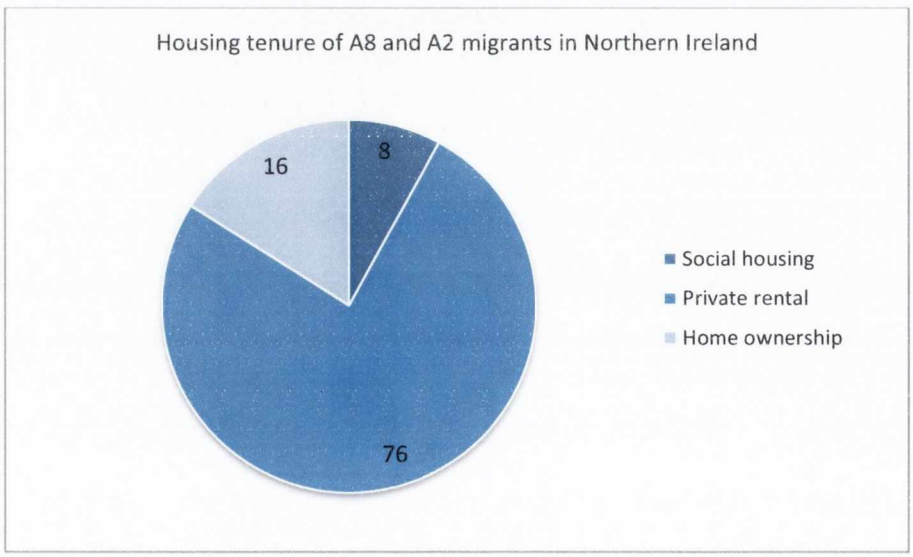

Figure 6.2 Housing tenure of A8 and A2 migrants in Northern Ireland (Source: Census, 2011)

The low proportion of migrants in social housing dispels the myth that they are overrepresented and 'taking social homes from local people'. This is a stereotypical viewpoint which is often articulated locally through hate crime incidents as illustrated in Figures 6.3 and 6.4. Hate crime, racist attacks and intimidation tactics have been recorded in both case study areas, but also in other locations across Northern Ireland. Such incidents

have culminated in a dedicated task force set up by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) in May 2014 to tackle the recent upsurge in attacks. It is important to point out that even though a sizeable proportion of migrants reside in social housing estates, many of these houses have been previously sold to the private rental sector and are no longer part of NIHE stock. As a consequence this has led to a view that migrants are occupying social homes, when in fact they are renting in the private sector but in a social housing area.

Figure 6.3 Racist graffiti in East Belfast
(Source: BBC News, 5 May 2014a)

Figure 6.4 Racist graffiti in East Belfast
(Source: BBC News, 29 July 2014b)

A significant number of migrants in this research moved to Northern Ireland with temporary intentions, driven primarily by employment opportunities. Parallel to arranging employment some migrants find housing before relocating, either through personal

recommendations or tied to employment and often resulting in shared accommodation. Understandably at the outset they do not consider the tenure, cost and quality of housing to be a priority matter. Similar to accessing employment, migrants were simply content to find some form of housing to get started. At first they tend to locate within the private rental sector, with a pattern of migrants making multiple housing moves, up to five times in a period of three to five years. They do this for various reasons that will be examined in the remainder of this chapter. To a large extent this pattern prevails with the following sections considering if and how migrants can 'progress' to other housing tenures, or if they are able to make the best of their existing housing arrangements.

In each case study area, migrants described how they preferred to locate near to their employment, in close proximity to town centres and near co-ethnic family and friends. Individuals attribute significance to a combination of these factors, but often resulted in concentrations of migrants living in particular streets, estates or neighbourhoods. Although these factors are important initially, this research shows that migrants' ability to exercise agency within housing structures is more complex and nuanced. The degree to which migrants are able to transform initial housing arrangements into something more stable and permanent is not clear. As their plans change due to family expansion, employment commitments, or simply a decision to make Northern Ireland a more permanent home, migrants face new and evolving circumstances. The way in which they are able to access housing resources influences their decision-making processes, which subsequently affects their social and economic mobility. The remainder of this chapter examines this through analysis of different housing options including, the private rental sector, social housing and homeownership.

The Private Rental Sector

The private rental market represents 17 percent of housing tenure in Northern Ireland (DSD, 2013), yet continues to be the most dominant sector for A8 and A2 migrants accounting for 74 per cent (Census, 2011). Migrants express a level of satisfaction with the flexibility that renting provides, especially when there is uncertainty about their future and whether they will settle indefinitely in Northern Ireland. Despite interviewees indicating decisions to remain in private sector housing, it was not clear whether this is through choice or necessity. A complex web of factors influenced private sector housing choices including: housing conditions, cost, proximity to employment, family life and lifestyle, sense of community and safety concerns. Migrants learn about housing via interaction with

landlords, estate agents, employers, family, friends and other migrants; and also through resources including the Internet and newspapers.

Private landlords significantly influence migrants' housing selections. They have capitalised on the increased demand for housing resulting from migration, by making it accessible and attractive to migrants. They have created communication structures and some landlords have even implemented financial incentives for migrants who recommend their housing to others, as highlighted by Luxandra:

> "My friend knew a guy who worked for the landlord so he just talked to him and he got us £20 off every month." (Luxandra, Romania, CSB)

These are especially attractive to migrants if they are unable to realise alternatives such as social housing or homeownership. Some migrants felt a degree of loyalty towards their landlord, placing value on good relationships and quality housing standards. Although they did not express strict obligations to remain with a landlord, they explained how decisions to leave could be risky and could jeopardise their current living standards. Some migrant communities suggested preferential treatment over other groups:

> "The landlords even said that they prefer to give the house to a Polish family rather than any other nationalities because they think the house is always clean and well maintained. So they don't have to worry about the houses. [A7] said that this is her fourth house and the landlords were always very optimistic and friendly to them." (A7 via interpreter, Poland, CSB)

Private landlords do help to create stable and secure housing situations for migrants; however exploitative cost and conditions are not uncommon. Some migrants are able to negotiate their way into more desirable housing arrangements than others, but again this is only possible if they can navigate their way through the right people, knowledge and resources. Migrants view the private rental sector as flexible, cost effective and offering choice. Despite this it can hamper their ability to seek alternatives. Evidently, the relationship between migrants and the private rental sector is dynamic and complex, something that is described below by an employee of the Housing Rights Service:

> "It is anecdotal really...you will find this in housing markets where migrants are perhaps concentrated in less desirable housing with landlords taking advantage of this new market and displacing local tenants....Migrants are less likely to report poor conditions, be unsure about their rights and less able to advocate for proper repairs." (Housing Rights Service)

The private rental sector in Northern Ireland remains largely unregulated with the exception of environmental health requirements. Despite the recent introduction (February 2014) of a Landlord Registration Scheme, there was a belief amongst some in the third sector that other statutory structures and stakeholders should take a more proactive role:

> "We are very cynical about this [the new Landlord Registration Scheme]. It is really only a light touch database that will allow Councils to identify landlords. Criminal landlords will just ignore it. We encourage local councils to target this but to be frank our local councils have been very reluctant and don't have the resources to crack down on what we see as poor management. There have been very few prosecutions against landlords for example. And with the reorganisation of local government, their focus is just going to be on other issues than the private rental sector. So it is not a good picture out there at the moment." (Housing Rights Service)

Making multiple housing moves within the private rental sector was common for migrants. As will be discussed below, migrants move for various reasons with these actions indicative of migrants becoming both resourceful and selective agents. Although they stress the importance of finding housing that is near to their employment, it is apparent that migrants use complex strategies in an attempt to improve their housing situations.

> "We rented from my sister-in-laws husband who owned a three bedroom flat and the neighbours had just moved out. It was fine in the beginning to live with them, two families together, but after a while it's not....We used to live in [a town 10 miles from CSA] but then we got a job in [CSA]. So we decided to move to [CSA] because it was closer and cheaper of course. We got information about renting from the newspaper...but before we moved to [CSA] we asked my friend if it would be safe for us immigrants. And they told us this area, or this area etc. So then I went to the internet website and then through the newspaper and we just looked for a house. So then we just saw something and went for that." (Anna, Poland, CSA)

Employment was an initial factor for Anna in determining her housing location, but other factors were also considered. She stresses the importance of tapping into local knowledge and with particular attention to safety matters in relation to sectarian fears. Two Polish women each describe similar scenarios in their hunt for suitable housing. For both, the support of family and co-ethnic friends was imperative. A range of criteria was important in assessing options and include; housing quality, location and neighbourhood. Location was evaluated according to proximity to employment and ease of access to children's schools. Meanwhile neighbourhood, identity and culture were considered:

> "[A9] lived in [a village 2 miles from CSB] and it was a more Protestant area, there was no Catholic church and it was far from the city centre as well. It was too far to go to the Catholic school and whenever [her] husband took the car to go to work it was a long distance to walk. But there was nothing wrong with the neighbourhood... [A7's] reason was because the previous house was really cold. It was in the city centre, but she also wanted to have a garden. So that is why they moved. It was better in here too because of the children, because they have their friends here and they can go out here to play. They couldn't do this in the city centre, they stayed more at home... [A9] said that her family lives a few houses from here, so it's family as well. They agree that the part of CSB where the Housing Executive homes are, are a bit scary. [A7] used to live in [an estate] which is beside the Housing Executive homes and the children were really nasty, it was really dirty and her children were harassed. Yes, that was the reason why they moved to the city and then that was not good, because they had no friends and so they moved here. It is nice and quiet and the neighbours are lovely. They are nice houses." (A7 and A9 via interpreter, Poland, CSB)

Migrants initially view the private rental sector as preferable to other options in relation to housing quality and cost, but also better suited to lifestyle, family and employment factors. As they become more settled, their housing decisions are influenced by additional considerations connected to personal safety. Most notable is ethno-religious housing segregation in Northern Ireland. Migrants learn about and interpret this phenomenon from other migrants, and from other sources including the Internet, through work colleagues, landlords, estate agents and by visiting potential housing locations, before making housing decisions. Local communities, and their association with particular identities, have become an additional layer on migrants housing decisions as indicated by Luxandra:

"We never had any problems. I used to rent a house from an estate agent and he was so nice. He actually advised us not to move to [an estate in CSB] for example because some people there are racist. (Luxandra, Romania, CSB)

Through these different mechanisms for making sense of housing structures, migrants accrue individual agency that allows them to judge where they believe it is safe to live as Roman and Mikolaj elaborate:

"We stayed in a guest house first as we couldn't find anything we wanted. I went on the internet and found a map of Belfast that had good and bad areas marked on it. We discovered that it is not safe to live anywhere. So [CSA] was not on that map and we moved to a house there. So that is where we continued our research from and we finally found a house." (Roman, Latvia, CSA).

"If you are a Pole like me it's better if you live in a mixed area. Because if you live in the completely Protestant area like [an estate in CSB], you can have some problems with the boys from the paramilitaries or something like that. That is why I chose to live where I am now, to keep those problems away from me...I just found this out myself. Because when I started my job I tried not to stick with anybody and I found out very shortly how they treat me, where they are living, what they are talking about...So then I knew what kind of problems I would get if I was living beside them. I found this out myself...you can just feel it you know. For example, if you drive through East Belfast...when you see graffiti and the murals with guns, you say to yourself that place has to be mad. So I just did something like that in [CSB]." (Mikolaj, Poland, CSB)

Andreia gathered knowledge in a similar way, indicating the importance of the local community on her decision to locate in a particular area:

"No...hmm...there's not much choice, we have always been in new neighbourhoods but it is always expensive. I would be so happy if I could pay less honestly. I know that there are good houses for about £300 but I cannot stay there because I am afraid that I will be robbed or my car stolen. So I have to pay £500, it's expensive and so it means extra hours working...We just go and look in the neighbourhood and you can see. The one I live in now, it's nice and the grass is cut. Then when you go to another one you will see the garbage and the people looking strange at you.

> And, you also hear about it. When you go and see a house you will know whether you will have problems or not." (Andreia, Romania, CSB).

It is clear that Andreia observes the local community in a specific way, with the social characteristics of the local population and class issues impacting on her actions. These experiences contrast with migrants' initial perceptions where they equate the private rental sector with freedom and choice and demonstrate the complex and multiple factors that influence and ultimately affect their choices. Other housing options are now scrutinised.

Social Housing

Social housing in Northern Ireland accounts for 16 per cent of household tenure (DSD, 2013), a figure that drops to 8 per cent amongst A8 and A2 migrants. Both the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) and a number of Housing Associations provide social housing. Access is determined primarily by housing need that awards points under four categories; intimidation, insecurity of tenure, housing conditions and health and social well-being assessment. The number of points determines where applicants are placed on the housing waiting list. Chapter 5 shows that EU migrants in Northern Ireland are currently entitled to social housing. Transitional arrangements have been in place, meaning that previously access was dependant on the length of residence in Northern Ireland and being in employment for a specific period of time. The exact detail on entitlement was therefore a grey area. This section will examine the presence of migrants in social housing in Northern Ireland and among the participants in this study. It will consider migrants' perceptions of this type of housing provision, along with the delivery, uptake and experiences of social housing in this research.

As already shown, few migrants in the study were living, or had experience of living, in social housing provided by the NIHE or other housing associations. Of those migrants that lived in social housing (7) there are obvious locational trends. In both case study areas migrants were concentrated in specific housing estates, with up to 10 per cent of households in one particular area occupied by migrants. When considering the profile of these areas they tend to be particularly sectarian communities (from a predominately Protestant background), with high levels of social deprivation, high unemployment, occurrences of anti-social behaviour and increasingly race motivated attacks. In recent years housing availability in these areas has increased due to lower housing demand from

the local born population. Table 6.9 provides a statistical summary of the regional presence of migrants in the social housing sector in Northern Ireland.

Migrants in Social Housing (NIHE only*)							
	2007	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**
Total new social housing allocations (excl. transfers)	7,772	7,289	8,132	9,192	8,070	7,691	8,144
Migrant allocations*	202	143	205	256	268	272	254
Migrant allocations (% of total)*	2.6	2.0	2.5	2.8	3.3	3.5	3.0
Migrant applications*	998	1,055	1,225	1,368	1,870	1,894	1,671
Migrant allocations (% of migrant applications)*	20.0	14.0	17.0	19.0	14.0	14.0	15.0
Total migrant tenant households*	353	353	503	653	779	914	1,032
Migrant homeless applications*	469	342	455	517	795	754	705
Migrant household waiting list*	-	207	265	278	456	397	508
							Figures calculated on 31 July each year

Table 6.9 Migrants in social housing (Source: NIHE 2007-2013 and DSD 2007-2013)

The data shows that applications for social housing from migrants have almost doubled since 2007. Although there is a relatively steady rate of migrant applications to allocations (2-3 per cent between 2007-2013), there is an overall increase of migrants on the housing waiting list. There is possible evidence of an emerging trend whereby migrants do not appear to be moving out of social housing, with tenant households increasing from 353 in 2007 to 1,032 in 2013. However, these figures cannot indicate whether migrants are becoming more aware of and accepting of social housing, or unable to find an alternative. Regionally the proportion of migrants in social housing in Northern Ireland is significantly low. Overall they represent 2.5 per cent of total social housing allocation (Census, 2011). Although these figures present a demand for social housing, the experiences and opinions uncovered through interviews revealed more pertinent and nuanced issues within the social housing sector.

Several factors appear to determine migrants' housing decisions. The NIHE and local community structures have shaped how they perceive social housing access, entitlement and delivery. It should be noted that a significant number of interviewees were completely unaware of social housing as an option. Among those who were aware, entitlement was often met with considerable confusion. This confusion was not limited to migrants, but also to individuals within advice and delivery organisations:

"It hasn't always been the case [that they are entitled]. There have been transitional entitlements from my knowledge." (NIHE housing manager, CSB)

"Yes they have always been entitled since they joined the EU I think." (Housing Rights Service)

"I have other senior housing officers coming to me and asking what criteria applies. Every case is different and you are constantly looking at what criteria apply." (NIHE senior housing officer, CSB)

Those organisations attribute this confusion with trying to keep up with policy changes, the uniqueness of cases presented and how new migration has become very place specific. With not every area of Northern Ireland experiencing new migrants, migration has therefore become more challenging to deal with. Individuals working in such agencies openly acknowledge that they have had to learn on the job. High levels of staff turnaround mean that knowledge and experience is easily lost:

"I am a bit rusty on this because I am not dealing with it on a daily basis anymore." (NIHE manager, CSB)

With migration concentrated in particular areas, the capacity to accommodate new migrants is not evenly experienced across Northern Ireland. In addition to neighbourhoods facing low housing demand, this is likely to further confine migrants to certain locations.

Social housing was often described in negative terms relating to cultural, social and economic stigmas and the unique connotations for particular estates in the context of community segregation in Northern Ireland. Consequently it was considered as something to be avoided:

"We thought and spoke about it a couple of times but as far as we understand it is in not very good areas that you get a social house. If you get a social house you get it in a social area. Perhaps we are just too fussy or have different habits or standards. So no, we never tried." (Roman, Latvia, CSA)

Migrants differentiate themselves as being less deserving or entitled to social housing provision:

> "We both work full time so don't know if we could (be entitled to social housing), and you know, we are not used to that in Romania or in Italy. I think that maybe other people who have children or who are poor should have the money before me because I work. We are ok, we have never thought about that. Even with the benefits and stuff, it's not for us, we just want to work and live." (Andreia, Romania, CSB)

Andreia articulated the way in which migrants connect social housing to particular social and cultural stigmas. Others expressed a sense of pride and a desire to be independent, describing how they could be judged as taking homes from local families, who they regard as having greater housing need than them. Migrants also attribute their lack of social housing uptake to certain cultural expectations. With the absence or minimal levels of welfare in central and eastern European countries, migrants are not accustomed to depending on this type of help. Social housing in migrants' home countries tends to have a different meaning, associated with poverty and being accessed by those in the lowest social class.

Similar to the way in which migrants have learned to navigate the private rental sector, these strategies have also been used to influence social housing uptake. The context of Northern Ireland and its patterning of housing segregation based on ethno-religious identity has played a crucial role in shaping migrants perceptions of social housing areas. They associate living in specific areas or within particular communities as bringing potential problems. Migrants learn through previous experiences, by advice passed on through networks, and even more so, via housing staff within the NIHE:

> "No...if you rent from the Housing Executive you have to apply and then they have to decide and it is a long procedure to get a house. You will always get a house in a bad area all the time, like [a housing estate in CSB] and [another housing estate]...so no, I prefer to live in a quiet place." (Mikolaj, Poland, CSB)

> "No because those houses are on [an estate in CSB] and I don't want to live there...or [housing estate] or [another housing estate]. They are not good areas. It is not good for Polish people there. If we have money we can rent a home and can

> live somewhere just normal. We prefer to rent so that we can choose an area to live." (Annetta and Robert, Poland, CSB)

When migrants choose housing initially cost is a factor. However as they become more financially stable, it is evident that they are willing to pay more to be able to exercise choice as indicated by Annetta and Robert. This matter was also highlighted by NIHE staff. Welfare reforms have meant that social housing is not as cheap as in the past. In some areas it can cost a similar amount to the private rental sector. Some migrants are choosing social housing however, as they have the option of buying their home after five years.

Migrants describe how social housing limits choice. They have a perception that housing allocation policies place 'problem people' into certain areas. A fear of being placed into this type of area means that some do not consider social housing as an option, a point illustrated by Danuta:

> "Maybe it's just because it is [an estate in CSB], it's almost like second class, there are travellers, Polish people, local people...I know one lady who went to a housing office because she was homeless and wanted a house. They [NIHE] asked her 'do you have problems with your earnings...with alcohol...with drugs'. When she said no, they said she couldn't move in." (Danuta, Poland, CSB)

Migrants living in social housing also felt that they had no choice, believing that they had been strategically placed by housing providers into certain areas or that they were not sufficiently informed to make a proper decision:

> "There was no choice at all." (A3 via interpreter, Poland, CSB)

> "It wasn't my choice, my job was in [CSA] and I just went to the Housing Executive and asked for accommodation. I said my job is in [CSA]...We just took the first offer." (Richard, Poland, CSA)

In these cases migrants were referring to their experiences of being allocated social housing by the NIHE. Social housing policy ought to provide applicants with choice in selecting housing areas. When a housing manager was questioned on this, it was explained thus:

> "Basically it all comes down to the professionalism of the staff and the level of advice and assistance that they offer to any applicant. If someone requested [an estate] for example, I would be able to advise that there are high levels of Irish travellers, Portuguese and Polish and that there have been instances of hate crime against those communities. I would make you aware of this...We don't have Polish people living in [another estate] for example because there were instances of hate crime. We would say 'we have Polish communities living in [other estates], would you like to go look at those areas." (NIHE manager, CSB)

This housing manager's response indicates how the level of local knowledge and advice passed on by individual staff members ultimately influences migrants' choices. This is sometimes based on the allocating officer's individual interpretation of the situation:

> "[CSB] is divided between north (Catholic) and south (Protestant]. They feel more at home with the Catholic community. Some work in the south and are in private rentals and are accepted....but they would tend to ask to be placed in the north, where we do have more turnaround. Other areas are settled communities with local communities where there is little turnaround." (NIHE Senior Housing Officer, CSB)

> "Sometimes I would question their areas of choice; to make them aware of what issues may arise if they locate in these areas. As they get to know this they pass this knowledge on and talk within their community. This shouldn't really come in to it, but I would ask them where the children go to school for example, considering uniforms. Some work for [a local factory] and want to live in the south, so employment influences it. But it all depends on the residents, who you are beside." (NIHE Senior Housing Officer, CSB)

It is clear that the structure of the local community and the practices of the NIHE have an important bearing on migrants' housing choices. Street level bureaucracy is being practised by NIHE staff who make assumptions on migrants' identity, superimposing local ethno-religious associations onto migrants' housing options. They openly do this by informing migrants of such issues which ultimately influences their choices. Added to this complexity is the layering of other issues in relation to housing choice. Sometimes migrants may have to deliberate between a more suitable property and the possibility of problems arising:

> "They seem to know where they would be happy to live i.e. the differences between the north and the south of [CSB]. The type of property though is sometimes more of an issue. If there is a mobility issue and a family needs a bungalow, most bungalows are in [estates in the south] which are a different denomination from migrants. So they would have to go in these areas to get that type of property so in that way they don't have a choice." (NIHE senior housing officer, CSB)

Although the actions taken by NIHE staff attempt to mitigate potential racism problems, it could be argued that inadvertently these actions are counter to wider policies about choice and that they are essentially filtering migrants into certain areas. This also goes against a wider policy arena that aims to create cohesion and integration and it raises questions on how migrants are impacting upon, and being impacted by current segregated housing patterns. As illustrated by both a housing officer and manager, this has become a localised issue in areas where new migrants have located. Overall it is influenced by several key factors including; housing supply and the socio-economic profiles and acceptance by the local community.

> "Where we have availability is in areas blighted because of perceived friction in communities and deemed as areas where people don't want to live. It's up to the local office to make those areas attractive to any person on the waiting list...Not every district office is fortunate to have a lot of empty properties which [CSB] does, and that is how we were able to house a large number of people from migrant communities there. We had vacancies in areas that effectively [local] people on the waiting list didn't want. We managed to get down to 70 points which is the level of points you would be allocated with homelessness. This is very rare in any other office that you would be able to get down to that level of points." (NIHE manager, CSB)

For some individuals the process of acquiring social housing has been described as a relatively straightforward and positive experience. Not surprisingly this has occurred in areas where demand is low and considered unattractive by the local population, hence a supply of social housing exists. However, for other migrants, access to a social home has only become possible after a period of considerable hardship such as family breakdown, financial difficulties, homelessness and poor health. While migrants view their entitlement and allocation as being reliant on extreme and desperate circumstances, it reveals the

limited extent to which migrants will only seek help, i.e. when faced with difficulties that are severe, beyond their control and with no alternative option.

> "It is hard to say whether it was easy or not. He had a health problem and was sick at the time he got a house from the Housing Executive. He thinks it was because he was ill that he got housing because without this he may not have got one." (A3 via interpreter, Poland, CSB)

This Polish man's perception of being allocated housing is just one of the many reasons why migrants are turning to social housing, according to professionals in the sector:

> "The greatest one is domestic violence. There are also medical issues and loss of private rental, illness affecting ability to work, loss of income, falling behind in rent arrears, growing families." (NIHE senior housing officer, CSB)

Home Ownership

Census 2011 revealed that 12 percent (5,579) of Accession migrants in Northern Ireland were home-owners. Five of the interviewees were home-owners; of which three were in private developments, one in a self-build scheme and one in a social home purchase. While non-home-owners indicated that they were content to remain in their current housing for the immediate future, many did express a desire to eventually purchase a home as they plan to make Northern Ireland a more permanent base. There were several recurrent reasons for migrants not being able to pursue home ownership including: an uncertain economic future despite plans to remain in Northern Ireland, needing time to weigh up options i.e. children and education, and uncertainty about where to buy:

> "I don't intend to get a property or a mortgage here, especially at this time...I am happy to rent because you need that freedom if you want to move to a different place and to get a better job." (A5, Romania, CSB)

> "I hope to [buy a house] yes...but it's all about money. I would like to move to Belfast someday...I like it, we go there a few times a month. I like the social life because [CSB] is quiet. Maybe someday when my wee girl grows up and we can find different jobs. At the moment [CSB] is ok so we will stay for a while." (Mikolaj, Poland, CSB)

In addition they attribute difficulties in obtaining credit and purchasing a home due to their 'migrant status'. Being 'a migrant' and 'not from here' is a label bestowed across society; manifested regularly through the media, by agents in institutions and by local communities and society more generally. This forms an inbuilt perception that migrants are less deserving or entitled to resources compared to native citizens. At the very least they are made to feel different. This is indeed discriminatory and in this research was presented as a belief passed on by other migrants rather than direct experiences:

> "We have been thinking about it (buying a house) but we have been living too short a time to do something like this. Our friends told us that we must live here for about 3 or 4 years to buy a house because the banks need time to recognise what is happening with our money and things like that." (Tomasz, Poland, CSB)

The knowledge passed on to Tomasz was limited however, preventing him from exploring the possibility of securing credit i.e. through a guarantor. The difficulty in obtaining financial assistance was also experienced by migrants when trying to borrow smaller sums of money simply to get started or to make necessary improvements to social homes. In these cases however, migrants highlight the lack of support from advice structures that also associate migrant status with no entitlement to such resources:

> "Again it was a lack of information and other support. We asked again in the Jobs and Benefits Centre, for some sort of help or where we could get a loan or something just to be able to buy the most necessary furniture. But because my husband worked we were told that we were not entitled to anything...We couldn't get anything from the bank because my husband was only living here six months and we didn't have any credit history here. We didn't receive any benefits at all so there was only £700 every month." (Olga, Poland, CSA)

Evidently migrants' ability to achieve home ownership is constrained by their limited agency in finding their way into more secure employment situations. Although they equate the private rental sector with the freedom to seek better job opportunities, home ownership is very much dependant on finding higher paid employment and financial stability. This is particularly pertinent for migrants given the additional barriers imposed by 'being a migrant'. As stated by Marte and many others 'to be able to have my own house' is considered one of the most important factors that will decide their future in Northern Ireland. However, given that upward employment mobility is both limited and scarce, many

migrants do not anticipate this situation improving in the immediate future. Migrants' agency in both the employment and housing market is restricted, with persistent barriers presented by language acquisition and competence; prevailing discriminatory employment structures; and the limited acceptance of migrants into the labour market outside of low skilled and low paid employment. The interplay between both markets is complex and presents a vicious circle for many migrants.

Mikolaj however, shows how some migrants are actively exploring the feasibility of a new location within Northern Ireland. They aspire to move to areas they perceive as providing more opportunities, often not just economically focused, but centred on social well-being, with lifestyle and cultural diversity important considerations. There are also indications that some migrants want to move away from areas that are increasingly recognised as 'migrant' areas, i.e. locations that are dominated by migrant communities. These individuals wish to feel more integrated into society as Mikolaj explains further:

> "I want to buy a house and I would like to set up something like an association for Polish people in [CSB]. I would also like to improve my English and just keep on working. I would like to do something with my social life because it can be boring; you go to work and you come back. I am happy when I am coming here every Wednesday [friendship club] and I can speak with other people from different countries...local people...because a lot of poles stick together and I would like to change that." (Mikolaj, Poland, CSB)

Interestingly, the migrant home-owners in this study had lived in Northern Ireland for a longer period of time (migrating during 2005-2006), had acquired a fluent or good comprehension of the English language and were in stable semi-skilled or administrative employment occupations. These migrants had taken advantage of low property prices during an economic recession. The home-owners in this research did not experience difficulties during this process, but given that they are migrants who have managed to accumulate agency through language skills and secure employment, this was not surprising. This demonstrates that migrants can successfully navigate complex structures in order to achieve aspirations. But evidently this is only possible if they are able to tap into and accumulate the necessary skills, knowledge and resources to do this.

Again, similar to the experiences of individuals in the private rental sector and in social housing, community segregation and identity was raised as an important issue. These factors, combined with a lack of long-term financial security and regulatory barriers that prevent home ownership, have led migrants to become acutely aware of the need to be cautious in deciding where to buy a home:

> "Yes (it would be difficult financially to buy a house) but then you have to be careful where you buy that house. Like I was saying you don't want problems. It would be so easy to buy a house somewhere it is cheap for us." (Andreia, Romania, CSB)

While some migrants pre-empted this situation before buying a home, others were less aware of the potential problems associated with some neighbourhoods. Some interviewees were optimistic that sectarian divisions would not have any impact on them. The optimism was such that some individuals described how they felt buying a home in a segregated area could help dissolve housing boundaries, as migrants would be viewed as neutral residents in these areas:

> "We bought this [social] house here only because we have been living here for 5 years and it was a discount for us. But if I was to plan to stay here for good, to spend all of our life here, I would never buy a house in this area. I don't like it."
>
> *Researcher: Why is that?*
>
> "We have fantastic neighbours, I can't ask for better. But the majority of people are still quite suspicious." (Olga, Poland, CSA)

In one particular example the issue of community division has had a more significant impact, as illustrated by a young Polish man and his family. His experience indicates how segregation and sectarianism are structuring the mindsets and actions of migrants. Although migrants do have the potential and express optimism to dissolve housing boundaries, they now feel the need to navigate and avoid these areas:

> "This is a problem for us right now. The house is great...but the problem is with the area. Because we live on the Protestant side of the wall and we are Polish, people think we must be Catholic and we are not, but that doesn't matter because we are

> Polish foreigners and we should not be there....We didn't really consider the problems in this area which was a huge mistake. It was close to the city centre, there are lots of schools around, so it would be great for the future, for our baby, but now it's overshadowed by this. Yes it is much better in terms of financial stability and security for my family. But it's hard to live when you have it constantly in your head that you are not welcome.
>
> The problem for immigrants in this country is that they really have to learn fast, because if not, they will have to cope with things they would never really expect. I really respect the history of this country from both sides but they force you to take a side, either you are one of us or you are against us. I know that both sides are wrong actually, but that's the reality...Immigrants could be a chance for this country...This is the centre of civilised Europe and you can't go 100 yards [over a wall]...Believe me or not I didn't even know the word sectarianism before I came here, that wasn't in my vocabulary.
>
> The thing that I have learned is that you have to do the research in the area when you are trying to buy a house by asking questions like 'is it a Protestant, Catholic or mixed area', you need to know these kind of things. I know right now that we made a wrong decision buying that house. I don't really have the freedom to speak with my neighbours because, well they seem polite, but I feel a barrier between us." (A4, Poland, CSA)

Housing: Access, choice and decision making

It is evident that migrants' housing situations are not always an outcome of personal choice but influenced by many factors. There are factors specific to each tenure type. The private rental market is associated with affording freedom and flexibility, aided by private landlords who make this sector more appealing and easier to navigate. Private rental is often seen as the only option, as migrants try to combine changeable employment situations and find a balance between housing location, cost and conditions. It is notable that private rental has proved effective, in so far as it provides migrants with a greater degree of agency. Social housing was frequently met by confusion over entitlement, often cast with negative perceptions, and tainted by particular cultural, social and economic stigmas. Migrants only avail of social housing when in crisis situations and when faced with no alternative. Evidently, migrants' decisions to apply for social housing and the practices of allocating have become deeply intertwined with the context of local majority communities and segregation patterns. Home ownership is understood as an unachievable aspiration by migrants. It is curtailed primarily by unsecure, low skilled and low wage employment and

the discriminatory impact of institutional practices. The wider role of social structures makes accessing services and resources more difficult for migrants.

Common across all tenures was that migrants' housing decisions were increasingly shaped by the context of division and segregation in Northern Ireland, with issues of safety and the negotiation of local majority communities pertinent. Some migrants have accumulated sufficient knowledge to be able to negotiate this situation, but for others it remains problematic. While many migrants aspire to find better jobs and move to new areas, they have become aware of the need to carefully research where to locate. Migrants' choices were influenced and embedded within issues related to community, culture and identity. Another common trend is that they aspire to relocate to areas they perceive as 'better'; with superior housing quality, a better environment aesthetically and socially, and free of the association of being a 'migrant area'. This cannot be generalised to all migrants as indeed some prefer to locate near to co-ethnics by choice. However, it is apparent that migrants aspire to achieve greater housing mobility, away from stereotyped migrant areas and in an attempt to better realise and achieve their aspirations.

6.5 Summary

This chapter has identified employment and housing as being crucial areas for migrants' integration. It demonstrates that migrants' quick uptake of employment and access to housing initially fulfils key goals of migration. However, despite expressing a level of satisfaction at first, it is evident that migrants' aspirations and capacities are much greater. The chapter illustrates the multiple factors that simultaneously enable and constrain migrant agency, but most significant, demonstrates the dynamic interplay between both employment and housing markets.

Migrants' placement in the labour market continues to be segmented. Their employment positions are strikingly mismatched with their qualifications, skills and experience. Migrants' employment trajectories are shaped by the complex relationship between statutory agencies, employers, recruitment agents and even the local community, who influence their labour market mobility and integration. Migrants can achieve some level of mobility, but only if they can negotiate these complexities. This requires personal confidence, engaging with the right knowledge and resources, and learning how to apply agency in a constructive way. But ultimately migrants continue to be constrained by discriminatory and exclusionary structures that have become engrained into the

functioning of Northern Ireland society. In the housing market, migrants' aspirations versus the reality of their situations are also mismatched. Cost, conditions, safety and local communities greatly influence migrants' housing choices and so personal preferences typically cannot be exercised. Perhaps the single most important impact on migrants' housing options is employment; migrants who are confined to low-paid and temporary employment face ongoing financial insecurity.

But as agents, migrants do not operate independently of structures. The role of intermediaries within housing and employment affect migrant pathways. Those intermediaries include representatives from state agencies, the private sector, NGO's, and the local community, all of whom can work in both positive and negative ways. For example, landlords can be exploitative and work strategically to keep migrants in the private sector, but can help migrants make better decisions when faced with the context of ethno-religious housing division. The findings of this chapter suggest that the capacity and power of these different intermediaries are important i.e. the point at which structures and agents interact. With evidence of migrants starting to successfully assemble their own structure-agency dynamics; this raises questions over what is the right infrastructure to manage new migration. The following chapter will lead on to examining more fully the performance of state and civil society structures and how they are responding to new migration.

CHAPTER 7

Unravelling Integration: Complexities and Challenges

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will continue with the empirical research findings from Chapter 6. The preceding chapter shows why employment and housing are critical aspects that control migrants' integration in new destinations. The dynamics between structure and agency can both simultaneously enable and constrain migrants in complex ways. Outside of these domains there are other ways in which structures and agents interact within and between the state and civil society. Cognisant of the theoretical framework in Chapter 3, structures are not just regulatory and visible entities such as institutions or fixed resources that migrants draw on, but can be formed and mobilised in less tangible ways that can also be opportunities and constraints upon migrant agency. Migrants' integration is thus mediated through the interplay of other state and civil society structures. This is a key finding that will become an important component for further examination in this chapter.

7.2 Space and Place: Resources for agency

Chapter 6 has shown that migrants' individual and collective agency is critical in navigating both the employment and housing sectors. There are various ways in which they are able to exercise agency, both facilitated and constrained by multiple social structures. This agency can be shaped by the nature of space and place: places such as the home (local and transnational), neighbourhood and workplace; and spaces that are more virtual including the navigation of institutional structures such as legislation and policy, access to services and learning 'the system'. It is crucial to understand how migrants utilise and find their way around both sets of structures. Chapter 3 identified weaknesses in previous migration research in conceptualising agency simply in terms of social capital, without adequate consideration to how agency is applied and re-produced across a range of social structures. This research has identified several resources that migrants draw on to realise and apply agency: the use of networks; the importance and value attached to particular places; and the mobilisation of transnational spaces. Evidently there are varying amounts of value and

power associated with each of these resources, with impacts on migrants' mobility and the implications for integration.

Networks as Resources

Migrants are enmeshed in networks from the start of the migration process, from making the decision to migrate, to drawing on the knowledge, help and experience of those who migrated earlier. The exploitation of networks was apparent in this research, used in many instances to find employment, locate housing, broker language barriers and interact with institutional structures. Networks can provide access to resources that can help migrants accumulate economic, social and cultural agency. Networks are undoubtedly important, but whether they enhance opportunities or curtail agency is of critical significance. This study found networks as a double-edged resource; functioning in both positive and negative ways upon migrants' agency. There are benefits of networks in that they provide a vital form of initial agency as illustrated by a young Polish male:

> "My friends helped me a lot with the National Insurance Numbers and the Worker Registration Schemes and all the Home Office documentation because they knew more about it than me. My friend's wife is an English teacher in a school and is also teaching English as a foreign language for immigrants. So they are a good help." (A4, Poland, CSA)

This example is common with other migrants recalling similar experiences. Agency applied through networks can have cumulative effects, with increased social connections enhancing migrants' employment chances and housing options. Cumulative effects are exemplified by Aleksandra whereby an initial contact helped with language acquisition. Similarly with Richard, a contact made with a local person led to him finding better housing and a second job so that he could have additional income:

> "I have a friend in Northern Ireland who is originally from Portugal and she knows English very well. So when we speak together it is good for me because I am learning. Now I don't really have that much difficulty." (Aleksandra, Poland, CSA)

> "I met one Irish man. In the first months I just rented a room [near CSA]. He asked me if I would like to help somebody with painting, wallpapering and just homework (DIY). I said, yeah ok, why not. I work only 40 hours a week so on Saturday I can do something extra. This man, he had some relatives to the owner to the house where

> I lived and sometimes I helped him to do some jobs in his house. One day we drove to a house in [CSA] to work. I asked him if it was his house and he said yes. He had some tenants but they just moved out so I asked him if this house was for rent and he said yes. I haven't had any problem, but I know in the first years some other Polish people who come over here, whenever they found advert in the paper about house rent they had difficulties because they local people they won't trust foreigners to rent a house. But I had no problem, I just rented this house from him, and then I phoned two other people to share a house because I didn't need all of it." (Richard, Poland, CSA)

It is clear that networks are important resources that can help migrants enable their agency. However, in some circumstances networks do not always bring positive effects. There was evidence of migrants seeking better opportunities through being unattached or purposefully distancing themselves from such networks. One interviewee describes the difficulties encountered when contained within networks:

> "I just brought some books with me and just learned [English] at home. I didn't really have much time to be honest because I work a lot, 10 or 11 hours a day. That was the plan. The difficulty was in [a fast food restaurant] in the city centre where one third of the staff was Polish, so we just spoke Polish. That is really bad though for people. There are some people here (in Northern Ireland) 5 years and they don't speak English because they don't have to. There is a Polish doctor in the health centre and a lot of Polish shops, and even with the police you don't need to speak English. I think this is really bad though." (A4, Poland, CSA)

This young man's experience of being placed within a close network of Polish migrants in his employment, whilst facilitating social connections, counteracted his chances of learning English. He later explained how he made a decision to leave this job to purposefully breakout of this network. Had he not done so, he would not have learned English and would not have the level of independence that he now currently benefits from. This example demonstrates the importance of realising individual agency.

While collective agency through the combined knowledge, skills and resources of migrants may at times be considered more valuable than the power of individuals, it is apparent that independent agency can work more constructively in helping migrants to achieve certain goals. It is important to note that this is only realised when migrants make a conscious

decision to stop relying on the agency of others, by taking risks and breaking out of tight knit networks. A female Romanian interviewee illustrates how realising individual agency compares with relying on others:

> "It is hard but you have to try to push yourself into more. You really need to learn the local language to feel comfortable and secure. Even to apply for different services like getting a car and insurance. You really need to push yourself and learn the system and try to get in touch with local people, ask them, try to get a lot of friends and see the reality. If you live in your [own] community you will see the breakdown between minority communities and local communities. Minority communities are still missing information. They don't have the knowledge to access a lot of services."
>
> *Researcher: How did you push yourself?*
>
> "You have to start to extend your network, along with your Romanian friends and start to meet local people...Communication...through [my son's] school, I have a class and I teach theatre and drama every Tuesday...In your job you have to make new friends and be open and try not to judge people. You have to listen to local people...it is very hard for minorities to open their minds sometimes too. But it is hard when you don't have knowledge of the language. A lot of women have good friends but at the same time the language barrier keeps them all separate. They are too embarrassment to recognise this. That is why they think it is safe to be in their own community, to share the same things and have no hassle." (A5, Romania, CSB)

The benefits of individual agency are further emphasised by Richard:

> "In this country [Northern Ireland], wherever you are, should it be France or another country, you should learn the language. Now I don't have to ask anybody for help, I can do everything myself...That was the biggest difficulty, at work, but day by day [I got better] and even at work I brought some books with me for learning English language. I try to find new words and learn everything. Not only in the college [ESL class], but at work and at home. That was and still is my priority to be as good as possible". (Richard, Poland, CSA)

Social networks create an agency paradox. While networks may provide vital connections and resources that do help with certain aspects of life in a new destination, they also

severely limit migrants' abilities to separate from such networks to avail of wider opportunities and gain independence. This is reminiscent of Chapter 6 in relation to employment opportunities. There are different outcomes when migrants seek employment options on their own, compared to those who feel forced to rely on the limited possibilities that are confined within network structures. Networks only enable agency to a certain extent, placing limits on migrants' mobility and independence in the longer term.

The Significance of Place and Locality

Chapter 5 revealed the spatial patterns and concentrations of migrants across Northern Ireland. Similar to how network resources (between people) help migrants exert agency, the significance of place also has an important bearing on integration. Migrants describe their strategic movement to certain areas based on their employment, but also to locations where they feel reassured by the presence of co-ethnics, where they can form social relations, and benefit from the support of emerging migrant infrastructures. There are qualities that migrants associate with locating in certain places: being able to negotiate and avail of employment opportunities more effectively; manage language barriers; and draw on the agency of other migrants for knowledge and support to interact with institutional structures more efficiently. The importance of place is made explicit:

> "The main reason why he prefers [living in CSB] is because of his friends. Because there is a language barrier it is much easier to get everything sorted or get help in [CSB] rather than anywhere else." (A11 via interpreter, Poland, CSB)

Other examples indicate that by moving purposefully to a particular location, migrants can accrue other forms of capital and resources such as knowledge, economic and social capacity, less possible in areas with fewer migrants:

> "I didn't know anything about social housing or any benefits or anything like that until I moved to [CSA] when my now ex-boyfriend was working here [local migrant advocacy group]. That's how I got this job as well. That's how I got to know all about benefits and know how to apply for what you are entitled to. But when I was living in [a village 10 miles away] I didn't know a thing." (Joanna, Poland, CSA)

Emerging migrant infrastructures enhance the importance of place through the establishment of migrant specific support organisations, friendships clubs and faith groups,

ood shops. In addition, migrants have discovered
nd agencies can accommodate their needs, have
n example is that of doctors' surgeries whereby
for providing interpretation assistance, either
ment of multilingual reception staff:

> o receptionists who are Polish, so there is
> w they know that you need to arrange the
> meone there if you need to arrange an
> is always someone there to interpret." (A7

e can not be generalised to all migrants. Indeed
how some migrants have greater ambitions and
otype as migrant locations. On examination of
gained a greater degree of employment stability,
depend on the help of advocacy structures. For
locality, this is complicated by low levels of
ent, and a reliance on advocacy organisations to
rticularly evident in CSA with the presence of a
ght knit community of predominately Polish
up was voiced by its employees and user group,
el up to 25 miles to avail of their services:

> ut at the moment I have a lady from [a town
> rojects like this. Even people from [a city 9
> rojects but they can't find the same...I don't
> hey have tried somewhere else but they still
> port. So we don't say that we are only for
> nonth ago two guys from [a town 25 miles
> is right across Northern Ireland because we
> don't promote the project like that." (Employee, migrant advocacy organisation in CSA)

It forms an important social structure that mediates between migrants and statutory agencies, but also in providing a sense of comfort and security, especially for a significant number of unemployed migrant women:

> "When the project was established in this area, more families actually wanted to live in this area, more foreign families, because they just felt a wee bit more secure. Before it was a very closed area with a bad reputation. But since the project was established, more and more foreign families wanted to live here. We are a very good community network. It is a good structure in place here and if something happens, sometimes just one phone call and everything is sorted." (Employee, migrant advocacy organisation, CSA)

The importance of place was also evident in CSB although to a lesser extent with the local migrant advocacy organisation. Instead places such as the home, clusters of migrants living in particular streets or neighbourhoods, the use of European food shops, a friendship club and children in local primary schools, were all important social structures that help migrants' broker and manage their agency:

> "We have Polish teachers in [primary school in CSB]. We get Friday notes in Polish and meetings with the teachers with a Polish girl who translates for some of the parents. School is helping us, but with homework we are also actually helping each other. Sometimes I get phone calls from people who need help with homework." (Danuta, Poland, CSB)

> "There are Polish shops here and Polish companies...Sometimes it is like mini Poland in [CSB]." (Annetta, Poland, CSB)

Certain places can have significance for some migrants in helping them manage their everyday lives. Migrants have become dependent on the agency of others and the knowledge and resources that are provided by their locality. But similar to networks as resources as a way of applying agency; place can also constrain as well as enable agency. Comparable to the findings from Chapter 6, migrants can become confined to specific employment opportunities and housing options afforded by that locality, hence limiting their social and economic mobility. The extent and effects of this are illustrated:

> "I have lived in [CSA] for about 8 years and a lot of people know me. They just come to me and ask me how to fill in forms and what to do and different things like that...Just everything from translation to filling in forms, housing, advice on jobs...just everything. Because some people don't know anything, absolutely nothing." (Anonymous, ad hoc migrant support group, CSA)

The increase and concentration of migrants in specific locations and the implications of this were also highlighted by a professional in the housing sector:

> "All depends on the capacity in the locality." (NIHE manager, CSB)

This interviewee indicates that the extent to which social structures are adept in helping migrants' access services and resources is place specific. Dependant on the degree to which particular areas have experienced migration, this can reflect their ability to respond. This creates future implications on how well infrastructures as a whole throughout Northern Ireland should be able to accommodate migration. When considering that some migrants feel forced to rely on certain place based structures, this has the potential to impact on long term social and economic mobility. The nature and effectiveness of service delivery is questionable and will be examined further later in this chapter.

Emerging Transnational Spaces

The way in which migrants apply agency also extends beyond the boundaries of Northern Ireland. This chimes with current strands in migration research where the nation state is no longer a container on migration activities. The majority of migrants in this study maintained some form of connection with their home country; ranging from daily phone and Internet contact (Skype, Facebook, Messenger and email) to organised travel (on average once a year) between countries:

> "Just whenever I want (to go back home). Now you see it is much easier for me because there is a big difference after 7 years of being here. For me it's not a problem to book the tickets and go to Poland whenever I want." (Richard, Poland, CSA)

> "Yes I know it used to be (difficult to keep in contact). It used to be before the credit crunch...we would try to get jobs and try to go home twice a year. It's not even expensive to call home now. For me, it used to be once a year home and no

ringing. Now we have all discovered Skype! So it's easier to communicate that way. At least you can see and talk to them, whereas it just used to be on the phone. It's a miracle." (Marina, Ukraine, CSA)

Maintaining relations between family and friends was a primary reason in retaining transnational links. Migrants attribute the relative ease of maintaining contact to private sector structures such as low cost airlines that facilitate labour market mobility and technological advancements that make methods of communication easier. However, the increase, significance and value of transnational practices have proved to be much more than simply keeping in contact. Transnational practices constitute agency by providing vital supportive mechanisms, helping migrants make decisions about their future, comparing opportunities and weighing up their options:

"When I miss someone or want to talk to someone I just pick up the phone and say 'hi, how is the life, is it much better now?' and they will say 'no, stay there, don't come back to this country." (Pavel, Romania, CSB)

The transnationality of migrants' lives has been exemplified in a number of contrasting ways. Beata's experience illustrates that without the structures that constitute and facilitate transnational practices, she would not have been able to locate necessary help and support required in Northern Ireland:

"Her father in Poland found out (that Beata's husband attacked her) and her parents met with a woman in Poland. It turned out that the woman had someone in Northern Ireland that she knew. The woman told her to go to a guy in Northern Ireland called [anonymous], and he would tell her where the organisation that will help with ethnic minority people is. She went and met him and he brought her here to [migrant advocacy organisation in CSA]. Since then she has been receiving all the help she has needed." (Beata via interpreter, Poland, CSA)

In other examples, migrants aspire to use their migration experience to become transnational, in the hope that language acquisition and employment experience will afford more opportunities:

"The world is open for me. Because I spent a couple of years over here and I got some English language, I can communicate better. I can go anywhere; the English

> language is like an international language...that is why, nowadays in the modern time, I don't have to make a choice because travelling is much easier than 20-30 years ago. It's not a problem to pack up and go. This is why I don't think I have to make a choice where my home is, here or there." (Richard, Poland, CSA)

However, sometimes these situations reinforce the agency paradox in that migrants do not have as much freedom as imagined, especially when it is employment availability that will determine their next move. In some cases migrants view transnationalism as necessary given their inability to fulfil certain goals. They discuss having to keep their options open thereby raising questions on whether transnationalism is by choice or necessity, given the limitations on their agency in Northern Ireland.

7.3 Brokering and Transforming Agency

The preceding sections demonstrate that agency in the migration process is multifaceted, dynamic and constantly in a state of flux. Although migrants come to Northern Ireland with similar profiles, motivations and goals; their experiences, pathways and visions for the future vary considerably. It is apparent that many different factors intertwine to influence migrant agency. Networks, spaces and places, and transnational activities have proved important, but they raise questions on the nature of agency; if and how agency can be accumulated and transformed as migrants attempt to make Northern Ireland a more permanent home. Chapter 3 identified that agency is not static and can be subject to fluctuation in different situations and circumstances.

The Negotiation of Language

Language was identified as one of the most crucial resources influencing the agency of migrants. It is a resource that can be accessed directly through acquiring language proficiency and indirectly via a process of brokering language barriers with assistance. Language support can be obtained through formal interpreter assistance, but most common in this study was help from family, friends and colleagues, including children who tend to gain greater language skills than their parents. The scale of dependency on language assistance is illustrated:

> "It [English language] would be very important for independence. Now she has to depend on other people to do anything for her and this is very difficult. It would give her a lot of independence." (A8 via interpreter, Poland, CSA)

The borrowing of language skills was important for conducting routine daily activities, but also crucial in helping migrants navigate institutional spaces such as the welfare system, to investigate housing options and search for employment opportunities:

> "Whenever we filled in an application form for anything she [my sister-in-law] always gave her mobile number and then she would ring or text us and tell us what we needed to do, for example, there is an interview at this time etc." (Anna, Poland, CSA)

Despite being a resource that can be brokered through interpretation and translation, limited language skills constrain migrants' capacity to apply agency in more independent, permanent and positive ways. For some migrants access to language tuition has proved problematic. Although not always a result of inadequate provision, the demands of family life and personal confidence severely limit migrants' perceived abilities to learn the language. As Chapter 6 revealed, migrants disregard language as important as they feel it will bring no real opportunities. In the case of two Polish women, the presence of a language barrier is viewed as the ultimate constraint upon their agency to improve their employment prospects:

> "The only barrier, the biggest barrier, is the language barrier. If that could be broken there would be lots of possibilities to get a much better job. Because there are opportunities, but because of the language there is no choice." (A7 and A9 via interpreter, Poland, CSB)

As illustrated further, language difficulties constrain agency not only when communicating with agencies and organisations, but in multiple aspects of daily life. Language is a resource that is constantly negotiated:

> "There are still difficulties that he doesn't manage at all. It was all around the language problems and getting through the organisations, like the bank and everything really that involved speaking." (A3 via interpreter, Poland, CSB)

Language continues to be a barrier even for those who have acquired this skill. This is most apparent in the employment sector whereby language presents constraints on migrants' ability to progress through the labour market, suppressing their capacity to improve employment prospects:

> "I feel as though I am stuck on a satisfying level. For example, it is good enough for my work and I know all the words that I need to use in work. But outside, for example, to make relationships outside of the church and my work, it's still not good enough." (A4, Poland, CSA)

As explained above by a young Polish male, language acquisition only brings a certain level of power to improve education and employment mobility, with a perception that migrants' level of competency will never be recognised on equal par with a native citizen. As illustrated in Chapter 6 migrant agency is curtailed by norms and practices engrained in certain employment and education structures. These structures are viewed as impenetrable and outside the control of some migrants. At times migrants feel that they must trade-off certain aspirations in order to fulfil goals that will offer, at least, some degree of progression. Marina explains the value of learning the language, but how it is not enough to be able to achieve career objectives:

> "In our house we speak two languages. With my child I speak Russian and my husband speaks English to him. This is my treasure to be in this position. Ok, I may have had to change different jobs, I have worked in [the local supermarket]...you name it [I have worked there]. But I've had a big experience. I consider myself lucky." (Marina, Ukraine, CSA)

Another scenario is explained by a female Romanian migrant who also recognises limits on her career progression. She believes that she will never be able to practice her profession in Northern Ireland despite being a qualified lawyer in Romania:

> "You can't use your qualifications from Romania. With law you will never be able to practice here. The education is different. They told me that I would need to go back to university for another 2 or 3 years. But with my English being so basic I thought that I would never be able to do this, it is hard. But with my English [level] today I would say that I'm ok. I'm not 100 per cent but I don't think I will ever be able to have the same quality of communication in English as I do in Romanian. It is sad but true, that's the way it is." (A5, Romania, CSB)

Andreia describes a similar situation, but indicates how it is structures within Northern Ireland that fail to accept her qualifications and experience, also based on the fact that she is not a native English speaker:

> "I thought it would have been easier than it was. I had difficulty in finding my job. My work experience was not seen very well here, like none. What I had it didn't seem to matter too much. Everywhere I was asked if I had experience in the UK. I found it hard that people don't understand what I did before. I studied in Italy but it's just not enough. Now I am with a recruitment agency because everybody is scared of employing me." (Andreia, Romania, CSB)

Aspirations versus Realities

So far this study has shown that migrants move to Northern Ireland with high potential and ambitions. However, their experiences as investigated through employment and housing reflect different realties compared to their aspirations. These lenses have confirmed that there are barriers to integration, as migrants are not able to freely make choices, avail of opportunities and be recognised as equal to native citizens. Some migrants plan to make Northern Ireland a permanent home, while for others migration is a more temporary scenario with the option of returning home or moving elsewhere. The participants in this study expressed both opinions, but for a majority their experiences will decide their future in Northern Ireland; whether they can fulfil goals and achieve their motivations behind migration.

Migrants described several factors that will be decisive in deciding their future in Northern Ireland. They stem from employment and housing practices as explained in the preceding chapter but include: the role of local communities in controlling the acceptance of migrant communities; the structuration of segregation and sectarianism on migrants' lives; and the persistent barriers presented by both the state and civil society in their response to managing new migration. The following examples illustrate each of these factors.

Andreia reinforces how the continued lack of support and poor performance from statutory structures leave her with little confidence that her employment situation will improve. As Chapter 6 demonstrates, migrants housing and employment situations are closely related and continue to be a vicious circle controlling their integration:

> "I don't know if things are going to get better here. It all depends on what I achieve. I cannot stay in this situation hoping that I will get something. In a few years I don't know what will happen. It depends on jobs and security. We cannot stay in a country... (with nothing). When you leave your country for the first time you have to be open. It's like going to catch fish; you can catch something or

> nothing. If I go back to Romania I have to start from zero again." (Andreia, Romania, CSB)

Some migrants have found a level of contentment with certain aspects of their lives. But acceptance by the local community continues to be a factor that controls their social and cultural integration. As demonstrated in Chapter 5, local communities exhibit mixed opinions on the value and contribution of migrants to society. Chapter 6 also highlighted that particular localities and workplace environments can influence migrants' perceptions and relationships with local communities. Many migrants speak of their lack of acceptance:

> "That is a tough question. There are some aspects of my life that I am really happy with here, but some are not. I am happy to be back in Poland on holidays and to see my family and friends, but I don't know how it would be to stay and work there and struggle with life. But I wouldn't say that I belong to this place either [Northern Ireland]." (A4, Poland, CSA)

The structuration of sectarianism and segregation in Northern Ireland is at times something beyond migrants' comprehension. Yet it continues to have salient impacts on their ability to negotiate this feature. Migrants recognise that this situation is so deep-rooted not just at a micro level, but when advice on how to deal with this issue is also passed down from an institutional level by agencies and organisations. It appears that migrants are unsure of their positionality in Northern Ireland. While they approach this situation with optimism, recognising that they may hold the potential to dissolve or at least become impartial to community boundaries, ultimately they feel that migrants will also become part of a divided society:

> "We haven't decided yet whether to stay longer or for good. If you ask most Polish people they will just answer 'I don't know'. They don't really feel comfortable enough to decide. Well...some people will probably say yes but that is purely from an economic background. It is easier to live here. You just have to learn fast to live in this nation. We can't live here in this area and that concerns me a little bit. For example, if you ask the police or community workers they will probably advise you not to buy a house either here or there as you might find trouble. This could create a Polish ghetto if you know what I mean. This is really bad I think because it will send Polish people to certain areas, which is not good. Again, that is why I said that

immigrants are a chance for this country. But the reality is different." (A4, Poland, CSA)

These different scenarios demonstrate the multiple factors that impact on migrants' lives. It is clear how their agency is continually tested and mediated by certain state and civil society structures. Attention will now turn to examining each of these social structures on how they approach and understand integration processes.

7.4 Navigating the State and Civil Society

So far this study has focused primarily on the aspect of agency from a migrant perspective. Using migrants' experiences it shows how they realise and apply agency in multiple and complex ways, but also how their choices and decision making processes can be simultaneously constrained. Agency cannot be fully understood without deeper consideration of the structural environment in which it is situated. This part of the chapter will focus on the role of various state and civil society structures that are embedded within the migration process. It will examine the functioning of state structures in how government bodies view and respond to migration, including the presence of migrant intermediary organisations who attempt to broker the space between statutory structures and migrants' everyday lives.

Statutory Responsibilities to Integration

Statutory agencies in Northern Ireland acknowledge that the sudden increase in new migrants presents unprecedented challenges for service delivery in the region. The response has been sporadic, is still evolving, and to a large extent continues to be mediated through NGO's such as advocacy groups, community partnerships and voluntary organisations. Nevertheless, statutory authorities in Northern Ireland are responsible for formal mechanisms of integration. Legislation and policy frameworks outlined in Chapter 5 show that various government departments are accountable for ensuring migrants' equal access and entitlement to rights and resources. This ranges from statutory responsibilities such as employment, education, housing and welfare, to efforts that promote the social and cultural integration of all minority ethnic communities.

In each case study area the local Council was a key structure in coordinating help and support for new migrants. This largely incorporates a funding role for other community partnerships and organisations, but local Councils are also responsible for implementing

Good Relations strategies. Both Councils in each case study area emphasised the importance of Section 75 and equality legislation as a driving force behind their work. Representatives from each Council area acknowledged their approach in responding to the needs of new migrants as piecemeal, dealing with issues as and when they arose. Arguably this was as a problem-led system of response. Types of initiatives included: the production of welcome packs, translated information leaflets, welcome evenings, cultural events such as food tasting and the identification of hate crime incidents (particularly in CSB). These are important steps and issues that need to be tackled, but to a large and continuing extent these activities prevail.

Key actors in local government roles have acknowledged that migrants' needs are changing as they plan to make Northern Ireland a more permanent home. However this shift in response is slow in materialising and evidently not recognised by all. One Council representative's opinion suggests that migrants are 'happy enough' if they can find a job and a house, with no pressing need to learn the language:

> "If they have a job and house...English language is very limited among some families, but usually there is one who will speak English." (Council representative A, CSA)

In questioning whether we can go beyond this kind of approach, Council representatives attribute fragmentation and lack of direction from government in failing to better coordinate action. Most significant is their openness around the fact that equality legislation is not being enforced or monitored:

> "There is a lack of direction from the top down...we are not being given much direction from *the folks on the hill* [slang term for government in Northern Ireland]...policy at the top is not enforced...there's no big stick if you don't comply with equality legislation, it is compliance versus commitment. You will have the ones that will only work to the policy or rules and won't go beyond what is simply required." (Council representative A and B, CSA)

They also attributed the current political situation in Northern Ireland as an added complexity:

> "Things are difficult. We did try to set up forums...but there are also politics within communities that makes things difficult...we are doing all this against the current political backdrop." (Council representative A and B, CSA)

This blinkered outlook and clear lack of insight and understanding of what integration should involve, is not shared by all at a statutory level. A Council employee expressed frustration towards their fellow colleagues' perspectives on how integration should be approached. A Community Development Officer, responsible for over-seeing the functioning and funding of community groups but not specifically migrant groups, describes current practices:

> "Our Good Relations Officer, when you meet him...he is quite corporate. I am not saying that this is wrong but he is just more corporate than me in his role. I am more of an on-the-ground worker, whereas he is more strategic and this will have a difference. But he is going to these people [migrants] at times and saying, 'come and do this training course about *them and us*.' [I would say] that is not what people need, you need to be working up to that really. He would bring people out to see plays about differences. This is the type of work that our Good Relations Officer would be looking at and this is the type of thing that he would be promoting. I am not saying that this is not helpful, but the vast majority of it is not helpful. What I think is more helpful, and this is only my opinion, is building relationships with individuals...it is only by doing this that you are going to hear what the real needs are. I do think there needs to be a degree of frankness about this...but councillors go out and they promise the sun, the moon and the stars, and they will do this. This is very unhelpful because it builds up this sort of thing were they then say, 'oh, well, go to [Community Development Officer] and she will do this and that'. Then I have all these very dependent and expectant individuals coming to me." (Council representative C, CSA)

This employee questions the competency of certain individuals to effectively fulfil their role and responsibilities. They also emphasised the dangers of pigeon-holing migrant issues to particular departments or individuals. Migration issues should not be dealt with separately. Not only should they be brought within a wider remit of community development at a local level, but incorporated into the functioning of all statutory and non-statutory sectors at a macro level. In addition, with the diverse nature of migration, we can not assume that migrants are one homogenous group who have the same needs and experience the same problems. This is reinforced further:

> "I think there needs to be a greater level of support for ethnic minority groups in [CSA]. It's only a small fraction of the overall job that I do. I think there needs to be something that has a bit more focus and a bit more targeted. I'm not quite sure what, but certainly more than what there is currently....Integration is a lovely word but the reality of this is very difficult...People will look at a particular group, should it be Africans or Latvians, and think that you can deal with them collectively as a group. But this is not the case as people come here with very different things in mind." (Council representative C, CSA)

Furthermore, this Council employee identifies local politicians as displaying a similar outlook. Council Representative C describes those with power and responsibility at a statutory level as showing a lack of understanding of integration processes, blind to what integration should involve and how it should be approached. This is also apparent when compared to their colleague's perspective, whereby migration issues are conceptualised as grappling with facts and figures rather than addressing issues and processes:

> "I think we need to get a greater handle on the numbers around all of this." (Council representative B, CSA)

In addition to the difficulties migrants experience with the administration of statutory services, employees within these agencies also identify gaps in their own knowledge and understanding of policy and procedures. This is reminiscent of Chapter 6 where professionals in the housing sector were unsure of migrants' eligibility to certain resources:

> "I think there also needs to be more awareness for the support staff, those who are working in a supportive capacity with ethnic groups or migrants. These people need to have a better understanding of policy and procedures. Even people like me who are on the ground. I think their level of knowledge could be increased. You just have to pick it up as you go along." (Council Representative C, CSA)

Statutory employees can feel powerless in the degree of agency that they can provide to migrants. Although they can signpost to other support structures, they describe a poor joined up and streamlined approach in responding to migrant issues. In this case, NICEM (Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities) is viewed as a pivotal agent in stepping into this role and responsibility:

> "And then there are the boxes that we are all in. I can only work within the framework and guidelines that I have. I can only signpost on for further help. I have seen some ethnic groups put in applications [for funding]...it's because of a lack of understanding, it's not because they are poor or weak. They just don't understand the process...I don't feel constrained in my role because there are other avenues. It is good now having the link with NICEM as I think this was missing. I don't think agencies and organisations working in isolation are helpful either. There needs to be something that connects everything up and I don't think we are very good at this at the minute. I am glad to have NICEM on board because that is their area of expertise....they deliver some of their programmes in this area because in my role I cannot do this in a very targeted way. This is the restraint in my job, it is too wide." (Council Representative C, CSA)

In addition, migrants also highlight the role of statutory bodies as an impermeable barrier rather than a supportive mechanism. As revealed through migrants' employment and housing experiences in Chapter 6, state agencies are only supportive and work effectively if migrants can learn how to navigate them. As demonstrated through the ways in which migrants apply agency, for example through networks and the significance of place and locality, they devise strategies to help circumnavigate state functions as explained by a male Romanian interviewee:

> "In a shop there is no problem but it is more of a problem when there is something that needs to be done in an organisation like the HM Revenue or something like that...if there is a need for an interpreter they can organise this, but it is usually a friend that helps." (A11, Romania, CSB)

This individual identifies a clear demarcation between his ability to carry out everyday activities, compared to engaging with more formal structures. Migrants view the current system in Northern Ireland as ill-equipped and below par when compared to other countries. They regard inadequate language tuition and insufficient mechanisms to recognise overseas qualifications, as a failure of the state in preventing them from becoming full contributors to society. Migrants regard these failures as having a negative knock on effect, for example, in forcing migrants to rely on welfare dependence and creating a vicious circle when trying to improve their social and economic mobility:

> "I think the government should at least translate documents. I know in Belgium, where my husband's sister lives, they are willing to translate for you. They think that the sooner you get into the workplace [the better], because not having a job is not easy. They also give two years free language training. Here [in Northern Ireland] I have to pay for English class and also £50 for the NARIC translation which was not helpful at all....So in that area I really would appreciate more help. I don't really know who helps with this." (Andreia, Romania, CSB)

The problematic functioning of the statutory sector is also recognised and reinforced by those working in NGOs. They attribute poor practice to those working in front line services, failing to provide access to resources that migrants are entitled to:

> "The statutory bodies should be doing this [interpretation and translation]. There are very big problems with front line staff in those agencies in that they don't have awareness that they should be calling in interpreters or using the telephone line for interpretation. Especially with the Housing Executive, there were a lot of referrals back to the Belfast Migrant Centre (NICEM) for forms to be completed. Potentially there could be a form filling centre. There are people in crisis situations that we are constantly presented with across all offices. A lot of people come when they are at crisis stage because the statutory bodies have failed to provide the services that they should be providing on the front line." (Regional Office Development Worker, NICEM)

One interviewee goes as far as to suggest that racial equality practices are not being implemented and monitored at a macro level when informing policy processes:

> "I think the Minister or the Civil Service, they are racist. The whole skills programme is for the local community. We have been trying to push without any success. We [NICEM] are looking for specific English classes for specific sectors or industry but at the moment they say no; [migrants] should pay themselves or the industry. Another issue identified was how we can use high skills [of migrants] to breach our skills gap....but the department does nothing. They didn't even launch or properly publish the report. Because the findings were too good and they didn't like it. They only wanted to look at the negative impact of the migrant. You must capture both positive and negative. They only wanted to know if we have more migrants, they say they are burdening our health care services, education and also benefits, they have a concept they steal our jobs." (Executive Director, NICEM)

This interviewee elaborates further on how Northern Ireland's governance framework is failing to adhere to more macro structures, in the functioning of EU policy objectives of achieving integration:

> "We need to be pushing the whole European agenda on integration...It is the single market and we have all signed up to these things, but I think most Member States are trying to swing around it." (Executive Director, NICEM)

The Role of Migrant Intermediary Organisations

The previous section has examined the limited and much criticised role of the statutory sector in responding directly to new migration. In doing so it has highlighted the significance of community, voluntary and third sector organisations in targeting the needs of new migrant communities. Migrant advocacy organisations have emerged across Northern Ireland since recent migration of the early 2000s. They are present throughout the region, but especially in areas where new migrants have located in significant concentrations. The majority of these organisations have been established by existing community groups and partnerships, but also include a smaller number formed by local churches, friendship clubs and ad hoc migrant led support groups.

Trying to unravel the ways and the extent to which migrants locate and utilise help and support services was not a straightforward task. In interviews, migrants often stated that 'there were no problems', suggesting that help was not required. When explored further the problem was not a lack of demand for advice and support. In this research, overall awareness and involvement with support mechanisms was lower than anticipated. This was a result of migrants being unaware of such services, perceptions that they were not entitled, and feeling too proud to ask for help. Despite this, community and voluntary organisations have become crucial agents in delivering advice and support. Migrants discovered help mechanisms through word of mouth within tight networks, highlighting the dependency on relational rather than institutional structures. This section will examine the nature of such organisations, their engagement with migrants, and the effectiveness of advocacy as a means to integration.

Staff from community and voluntary sector organisations stressed the importance of their role in acting as a networking body between statutory agencies and the migrant community. They have become pivotal mediators in facilitating migrants' negotiation of

social structures. One employee describes the extent of their functions, filling significant gaps in service delivery that are not being met by the statutory sector:

> "The majority is welfare rights...really it is everything. It is education, for example, I have a girl from Poland...I am trying to speak with principals from different schools to find her a place. She doesn't speak English so I am trying to resolve this. Some cases are really [difficult]...when I don't know how to help. I sometimes feel a bit helpless in these situations. Apart from education it is the Health Service as well. We do realise that there is an interpreting service in place, but it takes time to arrange and if something happens [urgently]...something quite serious, I would help them with interpreting. If I don't have time to go with them, they use our phone as an interpreting line. This is difficult with passing the phone to the doctor all the time so I would prefer to be there. There is an interpreter in the Jobs and Benefits centre and I encourage people to ask for this, but they don't like to give the interpreter because it costs money for government. If you are a worker in the Jobs and Benefits office it is up to you to ring and arrange an interpreter for the appointment. But what they actually do is ask 'do you have anyone to bring with you?' Often people bring kids aged 14-15 who don't have a clue about this kind of thing and don't need to know about this actually. This is wrong." (Employee, Migrant Advocacy Organisation, CSA)

Furthermore, they describe how they have almost become a gatekeeper to migrant communities:

> "If they [any agency or organisation] need our help, for example, there was a murder several months ago in [CSA] where a girl was killed by her partner. The police and neighbours didn't know her and couldn't find anything out at all. So it was just one phone call to us and we tried to find out, because we know more people who might know her. We just help and support each other in different ways." (Employee, Migrant Advocacy Organisation, CSA)

Arguably these organisations are stretched beyond their functioning remits. They feel pressured to take on additional responsibilities, despite statutory agencies being legally obliged to provide specific services such as interpretation:

"Normally, they [agencies] are very open and even thankful for our help and support. For example, the Housing Executive, they also have their own interpreting line but it is very often engaged or they can't get access or something and they could be trying for half an hour. Instead they phone us and ask for help with interpreting. They are so glad that we are here and that we can help."

Researcher: "Do you mean the Housing Executive relies on you for interpretation rather than their own service?"

"Yes (laughs)...but we don't charge them. We are qualified interpreters, but it is not a normal part of our job, but we don't refuse, we are just happy that we can help in something like this." (Employee, Migrant Advocacy Organisation, CSA)

It is clear that the work of these organisations also extends well beyond their funding remits. Given the high demand and pressure for services currently provided by NGOs, it is unsurprising to find that these organisations face significant human and financial resources. Evidently they are under-resourced for the catchment areas they cover and for the complexity, diversity and time consuming nature of issues being brought to them. This pressure is illustrated by an employee in CSA:

"It is difficult to say [it's unpredictable how busy we are]. We have monthly statistics and it is usually 150-160 cases per month, not cases but issues. For example, I had a girl before you came today and she had three separate issues. She has been separated from her husband unfortunately so we had to sort out her tax credits, child benefit and housing benefit, and information about various things. So this is three separate issues. Sometimes someone can come with just one issue, but it could be an appeal or about disability living allowance, which can take up to three hours per day and cannot be sorted out in just one meeting. Then someone can come in with a letter to read through with them because they don't understand." (Employee, Migrant Advocacy Organisation, CSA)

Employees of these organisations not only recognise their potential in mediating between migrants and social structures in Northern Ireland, but how services should be mainstreamed so that they are beneficial for both migrants and local native communities. Similar to a fragmentation of services along binary divisions in Northern Ireland, they emphasise the unproductive nature of segregating migrant issues:

> "With our aims and objectives at this point I think we are really successful. I can feel that we are needed all the time, i can see the support that we can give people and this is very important for us. It is very motivating. From a bigger perspective there are different things that we could do more of and think about. For example, the welfare rights system, we would like to have a welfare rights advisor not just for foreign people, but a platform to provide advice for local people as well. It would be good to see the project as not only for foreigners but for everyone." (Employee, Migrant Advocacy Organisation, CSA)

Apart from the practical help and support that these organisations provide, they have also become an important emotional, interpersonal and community structure. They go beyond front line services in helping migrants who are experiencing difficult personal and family circumstances. These situations can often arise due to unemployment, financial worries and social exclusion:

> "The purpose of the Women's Group in particular is trying to do something about isolation. Trying to bring them together because very often without knowledge of English, the only thing they can do is sit at home and they feel very isolated and depressed...The Women's Group usually meet...it depends...it depends on funding actually, everything depends on funding. (Employee, migrant advocacy organisation, CSA)

Intermediaries are important advocates that can broker boundaries to integration between migrants and social structures. However, they also identified their limited capacity to become sustainable in the long term:

> "Our current funding is actually transition funding from one system to another and is only for six months and ends in September. We haven't been offered any new funding yet. We don't have any clue whether we have any money or not. We don't know whether we should look for a new job. It is very stressful for us. It was like this every year in the past, but it has got worse during the last two years after the economic downturn...If we are successful this year we should have an amount for three years, so this will create an opportunity for us for long term planning and try to expand the project." (Employee, migrant advocacy organisation, CSA)

Managing Migration and Integration

Undoubtedly the community, voluntary and third sector in Northern Ireland have filled an important gap in responding to the needs of new migrants. Advocacy certainly facilitates agency by providing migrants with a degree of power to be able to navigate and interact with social structures more effectively. However, the extent to which advocacy enables agency in the long term is doubtful; so that migrants no longer need to rely on support mechanisms and can become independent. The wide remit and continuing service demand on migrant support organisations must be acknowledged. But a closer examination on the types of advice and support provided, questions the effectiveness of advocacy as a mechanism for integration. This research revealed mixed opinions from migrants. It also identified the absence of tools for monitoring and evaluating effectiveness and the lack of a long term government strategy for managing migration.

Arguably advocacy organisations continue to deal with surface issues:

> "We have three different nationals who work with us on the Bilingual Advocacy Service. We are funded basically to increase the reporting of racist incidents, to reduce fear of crime, to support victims and also to give out information about the statutory and voluntary bodies, addressing social and cultural needs and also administering the emergency fund." (Manager, migrant advocacy organisation, CSB)

In both case study areas there was one prominent NGO migrant advocacy organisation. The methodology in Chapter 4 identified the number of migrants recruited in each of these organisations; seven from CSA and one from CSB. Issues of gate-keeping and the varying levels of access granted to the migrant community by each organisation were highlighted. It was therefore interesting to find that all participants in CSB were either less aware of (12), or had minimal contact (5) with the support organisation. In CSA all participants had either used the services provided by the organisation (10) or knew of its existence (3). Although it is not possible to make generalised inferences based on such a small sample of interviews, and with issues of bias, these findings may be a reflection on the role, effectiveness, and uptake of services offered by these organisations.

Migrants' opinions on the support provided by advocacy groups were mixed. Negative perceptions were expressed in CSB:

> "No...not really because people use them [advocacy organisation in CSB] just for help to get benefits or some translation. People just use [rely on] that office, but that is all they are doing." (Mikolaj, Poland, CSB)

> "I used one [advocacy organisation in CSB] when I was doing my documents. But people are not very much help. If you go on the Internet you will get the same information." (Andreia, Romania, CSB)

In contrast, advocacy organisations have become a lifeline for many migrants. They facilitate migrants' agency when they are placed in vulnerable situations, experience difficult personal situations, which in some cases can result in homelessness and unemployment:

> "Whenever she came here to [migrant advocacy organisation] to ask for help, [manager of local organisation] gave her a job and helped her a lot. Since then she has also got a job in [clothing chain store] as a cleaner. She also has a job cleaning in a pub." (Beata via interpreter, Poland, CSA)

These organisations are vital in creating a sense of community and security for migrants in particular areas of CSA:

> "I really feel that when people come to our project they are not just like our clients, but they are a bit like our friends as well. I try to motivate them and encourage them to do something themselves, for a better future for them." (Employee, Migrant advocacy organisation, CSA)

The positive role played by advocacy organisations is clear, but their role and functioning raises questions over whether advocacy can bring long term, permanent and independent agency for migrants. Instead of relying on migrant orientated infrastructures, how can migrants effectively engage with mainstream social structures? Some organisations recognise the limits of their efforts in doing so:

> "This is something that we have to phase. Now in a lot of instances this has not been done to the best of our ability. For instance, are they [migrants] aware of this café, do they know about [migrant advocacy organisation in CSB], or do they know about this community partnership, or the help that is available to do with health,

jobs, legislation and things like that. You would do this kind of thing [pointing to manager of advocacy organisation in CSB]?" (Manager, Community partnership, CSB)

Response: "Yes but like I was saying to [a local councillor] we don't advertise our services at all...because we don't have the funding...we would be inundated...we wouldn't cope." (Manager, Migrant advocacy organisation, CSB)

In addition to acting as mediators between migrants and statutory agencies, advocacy groups are attempting to foster integration using other initiatives such as leadership and skills training, engagement activities and capacity building projects. NICEM for example has recently created three regional offices across Northern Ireland to support the development of ethnic support groups at a local level. However, there are questions of what these strategies can actually achieve at a micro-level and furthermore, if these efforts can be turned into institutional capacity.

The format and effectiveness of the current approach to facilitating integration was put to the government department that has responsibility for this. It is clear that there are few mechanisms in place for monitoring and evaluation:

"It's not easy. We had an evaluation of the fund done recently which said that we should try and give administration of the fund to a third party. I would have happily done this if there was a sufficient third party to do this. The organisation tells us what it thinks it can deliver for a certain amount of money. We try and get a geographical spread, coverage over the main problems. It's not brilliant but it is as good as what we can manage." (Anonymous)

In doing so, they highlight the frictions and differences in opinion that can arise when working with other departments on how best to coordinate support. They also admit that a long term plan has not been thought through:

"The big thing for me is that we need to get language learning and language rights. DEL (Department for Employment and Learning) tells me that supply and demand for lessons is in balance at the moment, but there are a lot of other groups that provide classes. I want to see language mainstreamed, but they say it will cost half a million pounds, but I would say that's not much. That is excellent value because it

gives access to all sorts of skills. Yes you are right; it [advocacy] is a short term fix because we don't have the right pathways sorted out for the long term." (Anonymous)

Tensions between those in statutory roles and the NGO sector were apparent. The constitution and management of migrant groups was also raised as a contentious issue. NICEM for example believe that only migrant groups who are led by a board of ethnic minorities, can be successful in meeting the real needs of those communities:

"A lot of local groups [non-ethnic led] are just for the survival of those services and now they are jumping on the band-wagon with migrants. It doesn't mean that they care for them or empower them. You can also draw a good example or distinction on whether they employ local people or Polish or other nationalities." (Executive Director, NICEM)

They criticise the government's support of such groups, and the organisations alike, in their approach to managing integration. In the expression below, this interviewee was referring to how existing 'majority' community groups taking responsibility for migrants in their respective areas, will only result in reproducing a binary system that is simultaneously reinforced by more macro structures:

"It's the mess from the official: those who complain about the issue of funding are also behind the official [OFMDFM]. For me this is ridiculous, we all know who makes this mess but they are all behind the same proposal...The bigger issue is that they are only interested in money and not on policy. They are only interested in doing things for their own geographical area, full stop. But if you don't change the policy then you just reinforce the same thing. So to keep getting the government money they will not disagree with the government." (Executive Director, NICEM)

Several individuals across the statutory, voluntary and third sector have summarised key weaknesses in current approaches to managing migration. The first is the need to make government more accountable in implementing and monitoring effective legal and policy instruments. This is not only applicable to a macro level however, but needs to be filtered down into more micro social structures so that migrants and NGO's have the knowledge and power to challenge discriminatory practices:

> "We need to look for a different option in whether we should use a good case to sue the government. But here we don't use the legal route and the current system just keeps on discriminating." (Executive Director, NICEM)

An example can be used from the fieldwork based in Ithaca, New York to demonstrate how discriminatory practices are targeted through a process of outreach activities and education:

> "We do outreach to communities three to four times a week...people don't come to us. Because we are a law office we are very aggressive in our outreach approach. If any other programme feels that they cannot get access to farmworkers because it is on the property of the employer, for example...there is this idea that they [advocates] have to ask for permission, but the reality of this is not true. They [farmworkers] have a right to receive our services. This is where our outreach is different to a lot of programmes." (Justice Centre New York)

Second, is that migrants need to become equipped with greater power and capacity through the right infrastructure, as reinforced by the limits of advocacy initiatives. The research has demonstrated how some migrants, albeit few, can successfully assemble their own structure-agency dynamics to facilitate integration. For example, social enterprise as a potential mechanism to help migrants achieve this was suggested by the advice sector:

> "We have set up a private tenants group...with NICEM and STEP to try and involve them on that forum. Our long term aim is to work as an activist group to tell tenants how to use their rights. There is a limit to what groups like us can do. We need to organise migrants themselves to deliver housing advice, with our support, by empowering them." (Housing Rights Service)

Chapter 6 revealed how migrants bring to Northern Ireland many skills, qualifications and experiences that are not currently utilised, due to the barriers presented by certain social structures. But as evidenced through migrants' abilities to work individually, as well as collectively, at times they can become effective agents. Thus, they hold the potential to engage in practices such as social enterprise. There was evidence of small scale social enterprise activities in Ithaca, New York:

> "We do outreach to the communities telling them about our services. For example, we can help women form groups which then become run solely by the women themselves. They then organise and plan things they need like transportation and child care. All I do is provide the financial help." (Justice Centre New York)

Furthermore, examples can be drawn on how organisations aimed at supporting migrants use strategies that help with employment mobility, in addition to advocacy measures:

> "We help facilitate access to employment such as matching their skills and language to positions, bringing them to interviews and explaining to the employer what they can do. We have created a good vibe with employers, but obviously with some employers they tend to exploit their workers and a lot of this can be under-reported. But we have someone that goes into restaurants for example, to talk to workers about their rights in the workplace. Overall, there is some upward mobility." (Catholic Charities Programme, Ithaca, New York)

Third, is that future progress needs to be monitored and evaluated. The context of Northern Ireland as a new migration destination has highlighted this weakness. With migration concentrated in particular geographical locations, the localised response means that only certain areas are learning how to deal with the complexities of migration. There is a need for government to implement ethnic monitoring in all future policy and practice:

> "The key thing that we have in the new strategy is the implementation of ethnic monitoring. I completely underestimated how difficult it would be to get ethnic monitoring implemented here. This will take us a distance and people will no longer have an excuse. If we get this it will require a lot of training for those responsible." (Anonymous)

7.5 Migrants Participation and Representation

Chapter 2 identified that migrant integration is more than becoming inserted into core domains such as employment and housing. Chapter 6 demonstrated that although these are critical areas, migrants' employment and housing experiences impact upon other aspects of their lives. Integration also concerns migrants' political, social and cultural inclusion. Furthermore, the onus is not just on migrants to adapt to their new society; it is perceived as a two-way process between them and the social organisation of their new destination. This section will examine migrants' participation and representation in

Northern Ireland. Chapter 5 presented local community attitudes and beliefs on how migration issues are mediated, but this section will further investigate the extent to which migrants are visible in society. More significant it will consider how the context of Northern Ireland has played a crucial role in structuring new migration.

The (In)Visibility of Migrants

Although migrants may not necessarily want to become active and vocal members of society, through community groups or 'integration initiatives' for example, their presence in society should be one of acceptance and given the necessary means if they wish to do so. However, one interviewee summarises the perceptions held by many migrants; they feel that they take on an almost invisible yet problematic presence in society:

> "No, no, never. Honestly I was so happy about this survey. I felt that finally someone is interested in how migrants are doing here...I think it's a normal thing this migration process...We should talk more about this migration process, bring it to the surface. I would like it to show, to be explained, what's normal and what happens. I am always asked 'why do you come here and why have I chosen this place?' Because it's a normal process, I was attracted by this place. Like you say...it's so hard that besides school or something else people don't communicate with each other. I think migration should be approached with more maturity, for example, there are people who choose to live here and they come for different reasons, not only because they are poor, some may be educated and some may be not." (Andreia, Romania, CSB)

Other migrants and an employee of a migrant advocacy group in CSA expressed similar thoughts, with the opinion that migration issues are not on the agenda in Northern Ireland:

> "I was really interested and pleased at the thought of someone wanting to do research in [CSA]. Usually people concentrate on Belfast, no one has ever asked us to do research before." (Employee, migrant advocacy organisation, CSA)

> "Will this research be used to help improve things for us migrants." (A4, Poland, CSA)

These views indicate that migrants' experience a lack of both visible and vocal presence and as indicated earlier by Andreia, migration needs to be recognised as a 'normal' social

process in modern societies. However, Chapter 6 identified that migrants can lack the knowledge, power and confidence to challenge social structures that are not functioning adequately to accommodate migration. A professional in the advice sector suggests reasons for this:

> "Language issues are always a problem and again there is the fear among migrants of putting their heads above the [parapet] and being seen as demanding or politically active." (Housing Rights Service)

Data from the 2013 electoral register shows that only 32 per cent of A8 and A2 migrants are registered to vote in Northern Ireland. Presenting this figure to a Council representative and asking how the Council, together with local MLA's, could encourage migrant communities to become more involved or voice their concerns if required, brought the following response:

> "There is no single champion [any particular MLA]. This will only really happen if there are larger concentrations, when a minority grows to become more of a majority." (Council representative A, CSA)

This blunt response clearly highlights a lack of responsibility towards migrant communities. The role and practices of local MLA's were emphasised further in CSA by a migrant advocacy group and Council representative C:

> "It was more of a political thing. They [an ad hoc migrant support group] were offered help from [local MLA], it was before an election. It was everything about getting more voices for him. I think it was the main purpose of trying to create this organisation for them...it was giving him his nice tick that he was supporting ethnic communities in [CSA]. (Employee, Migrant advocacy organisation, CSA)

> "What is frustrating is the expectation that sometimes elected members will give to the voting population. This is difficult, in trying to meet these unrealistic expectations." (Council representative C, CSA)

There is also the question of how migrants are given the means to participate and what practices or initiatives are being implemented to facilitate this. One Council representative describes current strategies:

> "It's good to learn about other cultures and try food, but in what way does this help integration? I don't think it does, it has maybe broadened their understanding, but I don't think it helps. Even in these events I find a lack of ethnic minority participants. You will have people like me and community workers and those who are actively involved in this work. But if you are talking about the everyday person, they are harder to engage with. I think there needs to be a new way of engaging with people." (Council representative C, CSA)

Again this corresponds with an earlier notion that migrants do not necessarily feel the need to get involved in such events to 'become integrated'. As suggested by this interviewee there should be multiple strategies, as there is more to integration processes than one-off events and dealing with surface issues.

Migrants have devised strategies that they believe may increase their visibility in society and thus their ability to seek better labour market opportunities. Chapter 6 uncovered how migrants apply agency by masking their potential i.e. qualifications and skills, in order to gain employment. This tactic has also been used whereby migrants have learned to play with their identity. They do this to test potential employers on whether their identity (nationality) may be a factor in recruitment processes:

> "I do still see myself as Polish. I was thinking about getting a British nationality for the citizenship. But from what I have heard it is really hard to get one because there are a lot of questions which are difficult."
>
> *Researcher: Why would you like to have UK citizenship?*
>
> "I think that people with a British passport are treated a wee bit better. To be honest, there is a job that I applied for in [a clothing chain store] twice and I think that the only reason why they didn't take me was because I said on the application that I was Polish. Next time I am going to write down that I am English and see what happens." (A6, Poland, CSA)

Local communities are another important component of integration processes. The quantitative analysis in Chapter 5 revealed a mix of attitudes and beliefs towards migrants in Northern Ireland. While overall prejudice appears to be declining, other indicators show that migrants' contribution to Northern Ireland society is not fully understood or valued,

with relations between local communities and migrants exhibiting varying levels of tolerance. While recent reports suggest that the situation with racial prejudice in Northern Ireland is not as bad as previously thought (Nolan, 2014), hate crime and racial attacks have re-surfaced in recent media coverage.

Employment and housing experiences from Chapter 6 show the significance of place and the make-up of local communities as having an important bearing on integration at a micro level. Generally migrants stated that they felt welcome living in Northern Ireland and spoke positively about their relations with local people. However, examining the nature and extent of relations revealed more nuanced issues around the idea of community and identity, and tolerance and acceptance. There were clear boundaries to social integration encountered in the workplace and experienced in everyday life activities:

> "People treat you like you are part of the work community, but you will always be a foreigner, that situation will never change. You will always be a stranger, there is no better word." (Mikolaj, Poland, CSB)

> "I feel that we are separated a bit from local people, like with kids at school...we have to ask the teachers what we should be doing and how. Sometimes we are missing some things because we don't know. Sometimes local people forget that we have to learn all the time. Sometimes it is just better to be anonymous...just stay and watch and don't be a part of something....It is a bit about the local situation...like local organisation...you know...the ways things happen. There are a few levels of this...of life. For example, I have work like, school life, private life and social life. Social life is actually between Polish people because of the language barrier. It is difficult." (Danuta and Annetta, Poland, CSB)

Migrants are open to the fact that negative experiences are not representative of everyone in local communities. They emphasise how it is 'who' they meet in social circles that impacts on their experiences and their ability to form relations and feel accepted:

> "I can't say generally what they think about Polish people because they are very different. Some of them they won't accept foreigners, but others, they are alright. At the moment I work in the factory as a machine operator and some of them are very friendly to me, but others, they don't want to talk to me. So I can't say generally...people over here are very different." (Richard, Poland, CSA)

> "But some of the people are not friendly at all. It is half and half, you can't say that one is predominant. It is something...maybe a feature of Northern Ireland...resistance. Otherwise it is a great place to live." (Roman, Latvia, CSA)

Furthermore, they highlight the positive role played by local voluntary groups as facilitators in welcoming migrants into the local community, in an attempt to counteract negative perceptions that are often portrayed by local communities:

> "I can see some difference here [friendship club]. Everyone will say you are welcome here and I feel very comfortable here. You can meet some tricky people...they will always treat you differently. Because this country always exported people and now people are coming here, these people cannot get used to it. I think they need time. This organisation [friendship club] they are doing a lot for us, giving us help which I really appreciate, because this is from the heart." (Mikolaj, Poland, CSB)

When talking about the type and extent of migrants' social relations, local majority communities and issues of identity emerged. There are different ways in which migrants understand and confront the complexities of religion and identity in Northern Ireland. As examined in Chapter 6 it can affect their housing options and decisions. However, other migrants feel that they do not want to be associated with this subject and that it does not influence any aspect of their lives:

> "It's just another thing to think about. I don't see any impact on our lives because we have been told *'you are not real Catholics, you are Polish'*. So they don't treat us [as a threat]...because...it's not about religion it's about politics from my point of view. Poland does not have anything in common with this local conflict, so they have just left us alone. They don't treat us as real Catholics." (Olga, Poland, CSA)

On the contrary, there are ways in which local majority communities are starting to conflate migrants' identities with that of the local community as illustrated further by Richard:

"In the very beginning some people asked me if I am Catholic or Protestant. Of course I said I am Catholic, I use to be Catholic...but I started to learn about the differences in this country between Catholic and Protestant. I realised that there is a very big difference between a Catholic from Poland and a Catholic from here (Northern Ireland). I know this case is very difficult here so I try to explain...not to exemplify me as a Catholic from here....Because the church in Poland is not fully involved in politics, but here it is all mixed. So I tried to explain to them not to identify me as a Catholic in the same way as here because there is a very big difference. But now I'm Christian. I don't want to be identified with any side, Catholic or Protestant." (Richard, Poland, CSA)

Integration amongst Division

Chapter 6 has shown the role the socio-political backdrop of Northern Ireland has played in migrants' employment and housing experiences. Earlier sections of this chapter have also highlighted ways in which migrants' integration has been paralleled with ethno-religious segregation. This is a subject continuously raised by state and civil society actors when discussing the challenges of accommodating new migrant communities, to the extent that it largely dominates discussions of integration. In this study migrants did not regard the political situation as an issue affecting their decision to move to Northern Ireland. They were either unaware, did not consider it important or felt impartial to the situation:

"I learned the history and the difference of culture, like Catholics and Protestants and how they have some difficulties. Well anyway, every country has their difficulties." (Pavel, Romania, CSB)

"Nothing at all. For me that wasn't important, it was important that I was with my husband. Because my husband came here first and after four months I came over. I was alone with children and I missed having a family. I only knew where Northern Ireland was and that was it." (Aleksandra, Poland, CSA)

However, it is clear that existing divisions continue to dictate and shape the discourse on how state and civil society actors frame the relationship between migrants, integration and the context of Northern Ireland:

"Basically to continue the work on community integration, but that is such a slow process and we are working with community groups. But as you know even

> between the two main communities, Protestant and Catholic, it is so slow and then you have ethnic minorities coming into that mix. As the First Minister said yesterday when we presented this to him [the work of the organisation], we seem to have the finger on the pulse and we seem to be responding to all the needs that are emerging and we seem to be doing the right thing. So hopefully we will be there to make sure that the divisions that are so deeply embedded in the two communities does not happen with this third community." (Manager, Migrant Advocacy Organisation, CSB)

Although the context of Northern Ireland cannot be ignored, a problematic framing of integration was evident, whereby migrants are conceptualised as a third dimension being layered onto existing binaries. This stance is recurrent across a range of state and NGO actors. When one Council employee was challenged on categorising society in this way, a less than optimistic response was received:

> "But that is the way it is, nothing has changed." (Council representative B, CSA)

As explained by a professional in the housing sector, acceptance of migrant communities at a micro level among local majority communities also shows signs of resistance:

> "It is the same issues that we have had for 40 years being rolled on. It is about education and learning as people rather than labels, but the difficulty is getting this across to communities. Some people are buying into it while others are saying no." (NIHE manager, CSB)

Furthermore, a government representative emphasised how those with power and responsibility in addressing such matters at a strategic level, also show a lack of political leadership and understanding that Northern Ireland now faces new social realities:

> "[Politicians] choose what they want the policy to mean... I think they haven't yet fully grasped and implemented the fact that Northern Ireland is now a multicultural society rather than a bipolar society with orange and green... I have been slapped down for saying this, but at any one time there are three policies at issue: the DUP policy, the Sinn Fein policy and what should be the policy." (Anonymous)

Similar perspectives were also aired by interviewees when talking about their co-professionals, mirroring earlier notions of street-level bureaucracy when migrants attempt to access services:

> "In parts I have seen an improvement. I used to go along to Community Safety Partnership meetings in the early 2000s and migrants were talked about as though they were aliens. This is only one example." (NIHE manager, CSB)

> "There have been cases in the past and I know that the quality of the advice from the NIHE was poor. Basically if anyone came in and looked a different colour from the natives was almost automatically told that you are not entitled [to housing benefit]." (Housing Rights Service)

When discussing how to deal with migration issues in policy and practice, frictions and disagreements are common. Often there is a lack of shared understanding on what integration processes should mean between various actors including politicians, civil servants and the NGO sector:

> "I have been called racist because I said that we have occupational segregation amongst Chinese migrants for example. It was [an MLA]. It just closes down discussion on that, there are a lot of people who think they know but they actually know bugger all." (Anonymous)

> "I think the main thing that you need to highlight is that our government has no policy on this and doesn't do anything. From the beginning integration is a controversial term and I think for the local [here in Northern Ireland] integration means assimilation. They do not have any understanding about integration. They are just using the way to deal with the sectarian divide and using the same method to deal with race. That is the problem." (Executive Director, NICEM)

Public administration in Northern Ireland is currently in the process of transferring power to 11 new Super-Councils by 1 April 2015. This means that existing Council boundaries will change, altering the ethno-religious breakdown in some Council areas. One Council employee hints that this will be a positive change, as it will result in having one dominant single entity community:

> "Currently we have a 60-40 split with the Protestant-Catholic community, but this [RPA] means that we will now have an 85-15 split." (Council representative A, CSA)

This is the same Council employee who is of the opinion that migrants will only become more visible and be able to voice their concerns:

> "When a minority grows to become more a majority." (Council representative A, CSA)

These different perspectives illustrate how existing binaries in Northern Ireland continue to shape the way in which migration issues are approached. Binaries are manifest not only through local majority communities at a micro level, as evidenced in incidences of intolerance and hate crime for example, but structured through the way in which state and other civil society structures inadequately conceptualise and manage integration processes.

7.6 Summary

The first part of this chapter examined the various ways in which migrants learn to apply agency. It highlighted the importance of network structures; the significance attached to place and locality; and the emergence of transnational spaces and practices. These are important resources for agency, but as demonstrated they can simultaneously constrain migrants on how well they can apply their capabilities. An agency paradox was discussed whereby; migrants can work as both individuals and collectives to creatively and tactfully find ways to improve their agency, but ultimately their choices and actions are mediated through state and civil society actors including: statutory agencies, the private sector, community and voluntary groups, and local communities.

An examination of state and civil society responses revealed several inadequacies in managing new migration processes. There are failures in statutory structures to deliver services effectively, as evidenced through migrants' experiences and the role of various intermediaries from the community and voluntary sector. These organisations show greater responsibility in helping migrants' broker agency and manoeuvre social structures. However, whilst support remains based on advocacy, with little power and capacity to challenge or change current practices, they essentially replicate the agenda of the state in their efforts to managing migration. There are evident disagreements between various actors on how best to respond to migration; there is little discussion on what integration means, how it should be facilitated and with integration framed around existing binaries in

Northern Ireland. This chapter revealed the limited scope and understanding of integration processes by those in leadership roles, a clear indication that migration issues are not commonly understood across a range of state and civil society structures.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusions and Implications

8.1 Introduction

This research has examined how EU migrants' life chances are mediated by state and civil society structures in Northern Ireland. Synthesising theoretical debates in migration research, a conceptual framework based on structuration theory was developed and used to highlight the complex, problematic and multi-faceted nature of contemporary migration. This chapter shows how the theoretical and methodological lines of inquiry adopted answer the research aim and objectives. It identifies the implications for theory, policy and practice. The research contributes to existing knowledge as the conceptual framework deepens our understanding of migration in the context of new destinations. Finally the chapter reflects on the research process and highlights areas for further research.

8.2 The Limits of Integration: The *ideology* of migration

This study highlights the complex, multifaceted and contested nature of modern migration. Chapter 2 discussed conceptual debates on how migrants settle in new societies. This research has identified a range of challenges associated with integration because it is often understood as being both an outcome and a process. Previous studies identify integration as being reciprocal and accommodating. However this research demonstrates that there are greater complexities and nuances involved. Problems arise due to questions such as: who frames the ideology of migrant integration; into what are migrants integrating; and how do migrants themselves think about integration? These different perspectives mean that the concept of integration is not commonly understood.

The research has shown that integration is not a two-way process when examined empirically. The specific cases of employment and housing reveal ways in which migrants do not experience or indeed achieve integration as an outcome. From a government perspective integration continues to be used as a policy instrument and promoted as an achievable outcome, even though social structures prevent it from occurring. Complete integration is also unrealistic as migrants' experiences and the strategies they use to negotiate their new destination, do not reflect a model envisaged by the state. Migrants themselves do not speak of their desire or (in)ability to become 'integrated'. Although they

aspire to reach their potential, fulfil their motivations behind migration, and become an accepted part of the society in which they now live, they also reject a romanticised notion of integration. Integration is a concept with no shared meaning. It can mean different things for different people, with diverse connotations attached by various actors. There is an obvious gap between the rhetoric of integration and the reality of how integration processes occur in social settings.

This research used the concepts of structure and agency to explain processes of migration. These theoretical drivers informed the empirical strategy by using migrants' experiences and state and civil society perspectives to analyse the interactions and relationships between each of these actors. The remainder of this chapter will use the conceptual framework to illustrate these conclusions; how contemporary migration processes play out in society. It will use specific domains to illustrate the complex relationships between the different components of the theoretical model that is re-presented in Figure 8.1. It will also consider why the social context of new destinations is important and the value of structure and agency as a theoretical perspective in migration.

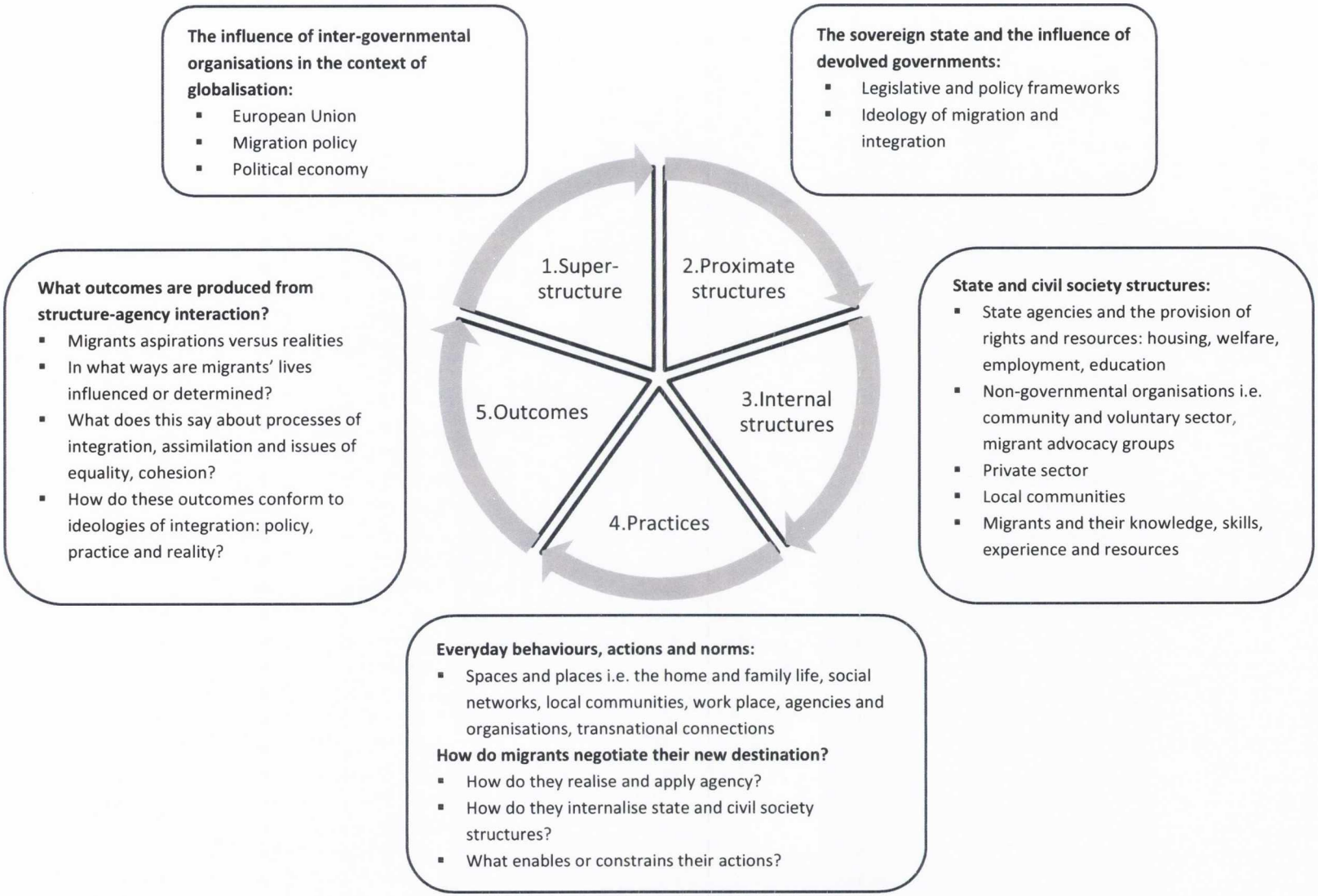

Figure 8.1 A framework for theorising contemporary migration

8.3 Reflecting on the Theoretical Framework

The study brought together concepts from both migration scholarship (assimilation, integration and transnationalism) and social theory (structure and agency). This addressed a theoretical gap in migration research, whereby studies tend to focus on either macro or micro perspectives, with less attention given to the dynamics between the two. The conceptual framework built on the work of Stones (2005) and O'Reilly (2012), elaborating on the elements of structure and agency as applied to migration (Figure 8.1). This conceptualisation has proved significant for understanding the complexities and nuances of modern migration processes. There are deep theoretical, contextual and empirical complexities involved that are created and reproduced through each of the components of the model.

Functioning of the Framework

In a multi-level governance arrangement that permits and encourages economic mobility, it could be expected that institutional structures would provide the foundations and the medium to facilitate migration. The conceptual framework shows how the 'super-structure' and the more 'proximate structures' are embedded in framing laws and policies that regulate migration at the global and national level. Effectively migrants have little power and control over these structures, as neoliberal processes and the functioning of the EU continue to dictate macro level decisions. However, more proximate governance structures in Northern Ireland that are responsible for accommodating new migration, should also reflect the policies and principles in part set by the super-structure. They have a certain level of power in formulating and implementing legislation and policy to facilitate migration, but how migrants' rights, resources and capabilities are negotiated between state and civil society structures is complex. Structure and agency function and interact in ways that are more dynamic and fluid than has been perhaps suggested by previous studies. Structure can simultaneously enable and constrain agency, and agency can be realised and applied in multiple ways dependant on the nature of structures. In particular, the research presented here has shown that there are multiple tactics revealed by the application of a structure-agency based framework. Migrants can accumulate significant leverage by working collectively, through everyday associational patterns and by collectivising resources. This was especially the case in self-help strategies around interpretation, sharing tacit knowledge about housing, services and employment opportunities, and supporting each other in times of crisis. However, the barriers imposed

by structures are not reducible to such tactics. As the analysis demonstrates it is not just about the quantity of agency, but the *type* and its capacity to perform in different ways to produce better outcomes for migrants. This concept is developed in the final part of this chapter.

Thus, macro structures filter down to the micro level as reflected in the shaping of migration discourse, the actions of the state and civil society and in local community perspectives. As emphasised by this research, it is the dynamic connections and inter-relationships within and between the different components that is significant; the more pertinent role of proximate structures, internal structures and practices. The analysis demonstrated the extent to which migrants can realise and apply agency in different domains including employment and housing. It emphasised the importance of both individual agency and the collective activities of migrants. Resources such as networks, the significance attached to place and locality in new destinations, and increasingly transnational connections and activities, all help migrants negotiate certain structures in their new destination. However, these structures are not completely permeable as they function in ways that limit migrants' opportunities and capabilities. Who or what controls and affects these structures is significant.

Migrants experience restricted access to the full range of opportunities in the labour market. They are often highly skilled but encounter a devaluation of qualifications and experience imposed by structural hurdles: barriers to language acquisition; poor support and development; the formation of employment norms; and discriminatory treatment. This has created and reinforced labour market segmentation, limited mobility and career progression. These practices are not confined to the micro level. They are engrained and reproduced across a range of social structures. Migrants' employment opportunities are curtailed by how employers and recruitment agents operate in controlling access to jobs. State mechanisms that should recognise overseas skills and qualifications are not properly mobilised or monitored. Micro activities in workplaces can also be discriminatory i.e. differential treatment between local and migrant employees. More broadly, employment norms are legitimised across society, from local communities to those in local government roles who also associate migrants with particular employment sectors. Migrants may not have the knowledge or power to challenge these practices, and at the same time, there is a lack of leadership and impetus from the state on addressing problems associated with labour market segmentation. Many migrants come to accept these structures, often

resigning themselves to limited employment progression. The structure in these instances simply reproduces a sense of fatalism in de-agentising migrants.

For example, often migrants cannot combine their objectives to find cost-effective, safe and secure housing. Their options are mediated by their precarious employment situations, but include other social structures that can control and influence their choices. When trying to secure home ownership for example structures make this difficult, as their 'migrant status' precludes them from accessing appropriate finance. Strategies by private sector landlords and estate agents; practices within social housing; and increasingly issues of safety, intimidation and the negotiation of local majority communities are also significant. Migrants' housing choices can be influenced by the imperfect knowledge and incidences of poor practice by state bodies and supporting agencies. Private sector agents and social housing professionals were found to operate in ways that manoeuvre and keep migrants in certain areas, limiting their choices and mobility. Even in state agencies social housing professionals can use existing binaries to dictate migrants' housing locations. A common example is Polish migrants whose identity is conflated with housing allocation in predominantly Catholic areas. In the context of Northern Ireland, migrants' actions and experiences are mediated by local majority communities which are themselves often divided; a structure migrants internalise as something to navigate and avoid if possible.

The Social Context of New Destinations

The layering of binary politics and polarised communities in Northern Ireland compounds the integration debate further. The socio-political backdrop of segregation and sectarianism has placed unique and important conditions on migration processes. A question remains on how we can expect migrant communities to integrate into a society that is still deeply divided, as evidenced through residential segregation and fractured social relations. It is clear that society continues to be framed in binary terms with migrants now viewed as a third dimension. This stems from how society is organised at a micro level within local communities, but also how binaries are reproduced through the arrangement and administration of governance processes.

Notions of integration are challenged by local communities as demonstrated through social attitudes and beliefs, and for example, the way in which they can dictate migrants' housing choices and influence their relations in the workplace. But these practices are also manifest in state structures, whereby housing professionals are also accountable for controlling

migrants' housing options. Evidently migrants are encouraged to marginally integrate 'on our terms' as they become conceptualised as 'fitting in' with two majority communities. This is a result of the way in which integration is understood by the state and civil society. Migrants are categorised as a homogenous group that is set against two majority communities. In fact the heterogeneity within and between these groups is less understood and somewhat neglected. Rather than being recognised as equal and individual members of society, migrants are problematised as a social group that should be dealt with separately. This is evident when informing policy processes with issues related to race, equality and community relations continuing to be addressed independently. Society in Northern Ireland is still entrenched in dual politics and framing matters in binaries. These ways of thinking are so strong that migrants become accepting of certain behaviours and practices, including intimidation, everyday resentment and even ideas about where they are and are not permitted to live.

The Limits of Agency

Advocacy groups such as NGO's can help migrants to negotiate social structures, but as revealed in this research they are comparatively limited in this role. Furthermore, some work more effectively than others as indicated by migrants' experiences. Overall, the community and voluntary sector provide a lot of support to migrants. Indeed initiatives stem from a problem-led system and remain based on advocacy: information and advice; interpretation; housing and welfare cases; and tackling discrimination and hate crime. These are important matters, but the reach of these strategies and their long term effectiveness is limited. Whilst they can help facilitate agency for migrants in the short-term, in many ways they reproduce the ideology of integration as envisioned by the state. They help migrants' broker agency through language assistance or resolving employment issues, but they do not use their role to challenge or change current structures and practices. Ultimately they have limited power to affect change even though existing governance structures place large responsibilities on them. The role of intermediaries and advocacy is double edged; they can help migrants apply agency at a micro level, but this agency is limited and not necessarily transferable to an institutional level. This leaves an ongoing tension between the state and civil society on how migration should be managed and accommodated.

Once placed in a system dictated by rules, regulations and practices that in many ways devalue migrants, some are subjected to the rules, but this is not inevitable. Indeed, some

migrants can manoeuvre structures more effectively than others, demonstrating that individual and collective agency is important. They learn to assemble and manage their own structure-agency interactions in an attempt to enhance their agency. To an extent they can penetrate structures: a result of engaging with the 'right' knowledge and resources, learning how to operate the system and having the confidence to do so. Nevertheless, they too can only fulfil aspirations and apply their capabilities to a certain degree, as they will also eventually become curtailed by more deep seated structures and practices within society. As evidenced, not all migrants have sufficient confidence, knowledge and power to engage and challenge a system that should protect them and allow them to reach their potential. This is also driven by a lack of political leadership at a macro level. Furthermore, within civil society organisation, migrant issues remain restricted to certain structures and are approached with a lack of understanding, or assumptions made, on integration processes. Despite these inadequacies the system remains in place. With little accountability or impetus to change the current structure, practices are essentially replicated. Practices do not reflect the rhetoric of integration and clearly certain state and civil society structures are responsible for reinforcing its ideology as a two-way process of change. These conclusions lead us to the question of how the state and civil society should respond.

The Value of the Theoretical Framework

Thus, using structure and agency as a theoretical framework has helped uncover how complex integration processes play out in society. Three possibilities emerge from the application of the framework in Figure 8.1 for our understanding of migrant experiences in Northern Ireland, their life chances and the implications for integration.

First, it suggests that certain aspects of the model are negotiable. Whilst some parts are relatively fixed at the 'super-structural' level (at least in the context of this research), internal structures and everyday practices are more permeable. State agencies, employers and other service deliverers who allocate resources and make decisions based on their interpretation of rules and regulations, can do so both favourably and unfavourably for migrants. The role of intermediaries such as estate agents, employment agencies and NGO's is significant. Although they are less regulated, they are nevertheless crucial in helping migrants broker their agency and access resources. The performance of the NGO sector has been weak and as the evidence suggests, some NGO's have been incorporated into state defined agendas about migrants and how they need to be conceptualised,

treated and supported. Relations within state structures are problematic with difficulties in managing consensus; to agree priorities and address the inevitable tensions that result from different (even contested) identities. The point is that alliances between different aspects of the structure can, and need to be, brokered to effect change; in short to make the existing state and civil society structures work better. Rules and regulations need to be supported and challenged to perform better; to create *outcomes* that matter to migrants. Most important is a structure that allows choice; whether this might be to integrate, return home or move on. In this case, it is difficult to see how the interests of migrants can be more effectively pursued in existing structures, without a more independent voice rooted in the concerns of the migrant community and not state interests.

This is connected to the second dimension of the framework which concerns the legislative and policy framework and the relationship between agency and the potential to reform the *outcomes* that migrant's prioritise. The empirical research identified how certain structures create barriers; through non-recognition of qualifications and exclusion from certain services based on inaccurate interpretation of rules. While there is robust equality legislation that should protect from discrimination, there are few cases that challenge inadequate policy delivery. Evidence from the research shows the routine nature of discriminatory practice, its acceptance by migrants and the way it reproduces discriminatory *outcomes*. There is a need for advocacy to make the structure work better, but perhaps more important, the need for aggressive approaches that challenge and confront the structural inadequacies of state mechanisms in advancing migrants' rights.

Third, this highlights ways of either improving or changing the structure. The barriers that migrants face in relation to housing, employment and a range of other services and arenas are in many ways systemic. The structure-agency approach adopted in this research throws attention on how migrants could improve their lives, given their dependency on a current structure with rules, practices and ideologies that do not always act in their interests. This highlights the potential for migrants to mesh structure and agency in a way that allows them to develop their capabilities. For example, the research revealed that migrants bring an untapped potential to Northern Ireland; they bring skills, knowledge and experience, and they are significant economic contributors and consumers. As evidenced in Ithaca, New York, small scale activities similar to the principles behind social enterprise can help migrants apply and accumulate their agency more effectively. There are possibilities to create social enterprise structures that could address issues in housing, employment and

other service delivery aspects. Clearly this type of approach is not new and there are many pros and cons that need to be considered here, but it is a way of addressing the sometimes punitive systems evidenced in this research and offering greater scope for agency. This does not mean creating a series of independent structures that could produce a form of segregation in its own right, but providing mechanisms that are consistent with making state structures also more accountable. By focusing on the concepts in Figure 8.1 and using the possibilities offered by the framework, this produces important lines for future research. In addition to examining the agency of individuals, research should also focus on investigating and challenging the power structures that limit integration and keep inaccurate perceptions of its meaning in place.

8.4 Limitations and Implications for Future Research

Like all research there were some limitations to this study. Focusing primarily on the micro experiences of migrants and the perspectives of state and civil society actors, it strived to include a range of interests. Inevitably there are limits on the number of interviews that can be conducted and indeed this was a challenge in bringing the fieldwork stage to a close. For example, local communities as additional research participants could have been included. However, in reaching a balance between quality and depth of data rather than quantity, this was limited to secondary sources that presented local perspectives. Local communities were identified as key mediators of migrants' agency and the enhanced understanding of their interaction and perceptions of migrant communities is an important contribution. Although it was not suitable for the research questions in this study, additional methods such as questionnaire surveys or focus groups could have been employed to accommodate more participants. However this is a potential area for future research. As good relationships were established with research participants, there is also a possibility of conducting follow-up interviews that could form the basis of a longitudinal study, or at least an entry point for any further research.

The research was based in two case study areas in Northern Ireland and one in Ithaca, Upstate New York. The international component was valuable in putting into context the internationalisation of migration phenomena and providing additional insights on migration specific to new destinations. The limits of the USA fieldwork element are acknowledged, as the case study did not aim to be comparable or of the same depth as the empirical work in

Northern Ireland. The findings and contributions of this study have advanced several areas within migration scholarship and areas for future investigation are suggested.

The research developed and used a theoretical framework that can better understand the complexities of migration processes in new destinations. This is valuable given the challenges in previous studies to empirically apply complex conceptual ideas on how migrants are framed as settling in a new society. Evolving transnational activities and identities were identified in this research and so the emergence of transnationalism in the context of integration warrants further attention. Specific questions could examine whether transnationalism is an option through choice or necessity, given the limits of agency in new destinations. It could also consider how society can become more adept in creating infrastructures that are more transient to accommodate new forms of mobility.

There is also scope for the conceptual framework developed in this study to be applied further to policy and practice, as many challenges remain in Northern Ireland on how integration processes can be facilitated in a society still entrenched in dealing with sectarianism and division. The potential of migrants in Northern Ireland remains under-utilised and under-valued. Whilst some migrants can overcome barriers to integration more than others, there is a need for further investigation on the mechanisms that enable and constrain these processes.

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APPENDIX 1

Rural Development Council (RDC)
Building Relationships in Communities (BRIC)

Background:

Over 90% of social housing areas in Northern Ireland are segregated into single identity communities.

Rural Development Council (RDC) is the lead partner in the Building Relationships in Communities (BRIC) initiative which is building the institutional good relations policy of the Housing Executive.

BRIC began in 2010 and is active in over 80 locations across Northern Ireland and is delivered and implemented through a partnership approach by the RDC, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) and the training consultancy TIDES.

Together, these partners are working to empower NIHE staff by encouraging them to promote a greater degree of sharing within the segregated social housing market. This is being achieved by focusing on the benefits of building peace and reconciliation capacity within the organisation and facilitating the promotion of a shared society. The programme has received a total of £3,522,000 worth of assistance under PEACE III.

Delivery:

The BRIC Programme is being implemented using three themes:

Changing Minds

This is being achieved through the creation and distribution of a bespoke training programme which ensures Good Relations are at the heart of all of NIHE's policies and service delivery functions.

The specifically tailored training is allowing Good Relations to be instilled into NIHE at all levels through a top down and bottom up approach that work together to make sure the importance of these values are recognised by all staff within the organisation.

The top down model includes a training programme on good relations that has been delivered to the governance structure of NIHE and its central and policy staff including: NIHE Board, Housing Council (representatives from all 26 District Councils), Directors, Central Policy Staff, Design Staff, Planning Staff, Area Office Staff and District Office Staff.

As lead partner RDC has utilised its experiences of similar institutional training to provide an advisory, mentoring and challenge function to NIHE which has helped fully embed the changing minds concept within NIHE culture.

Meanwhile, the bottom up model has been actively training NIHE staff alongside the Housing Executive's Housing Community Network. This has helped secure community participation at every level of NIHE's organisational structure from the Central Network to 5 Area Networks, to 35 District networks.

Made up of over 650 local residents/community associations located within NIHE Housing Estates, this approach includes a bespoke collaborative training programme that is grounded in good relations.

To date over 80 resident/community associations, alongside the corresponding Housing Executive District staff member for their estate have benefited from this training as have other NIHE staff located within the community, including Neighbourhood Wardens, Anti Social Behaviour Area Officers and NIHE District Office Community Liaison staff.

Together these models have taken the NIHE staff and their community partners on a Good Relations journey which promotes the benefits a shared society and has seen RDC and TIDES working closely with them to develop plans and activities which encourage and share best practices and procedures to NIHE staff in development capacity techniques.

Sharing Visions

By providing NIHE staff with a 'toolkit' which helps them imagine a society without walls and promotes the benefits of urban renewal, the BRIC Programme has been able to provide staff with the skills to influence the removal/re-imaging of several physical interfaces.

In addition to this research has been ongoing to identify NIHE owned interface areas which are suitable and ready for removal, re-imaging or renewal projects.

This research is being used by NIHE staff and relevant Community Advocates for Change who have participated in the Changing Minds theme to engage and work with necessary stakeholders to bring these projects to fruition.

This theme also aims to establish models of urban area renewal that are founded on the principles of community cohesion.

Crossing Borders

BRIC has created a unique opportunity for NIHE staff to explore and draw up cross-border solutions to housing issues in border areas, with a specific focus on segregated rural communities.

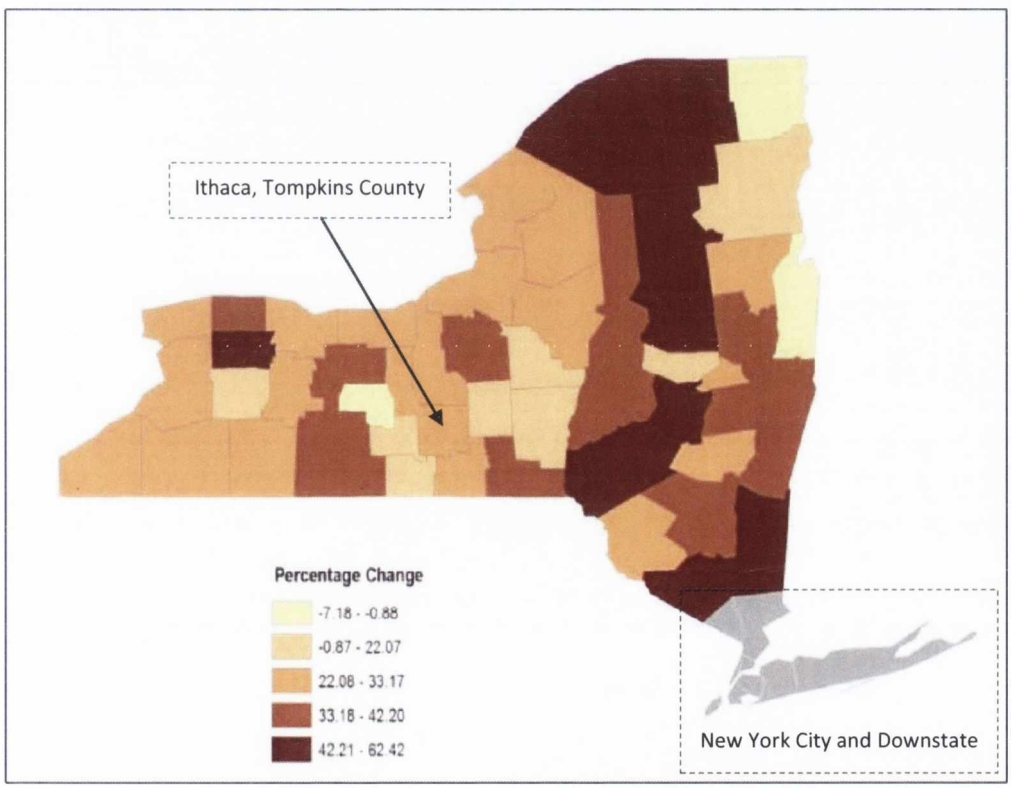
This collaborative work has been investigating how NIHE and their ROI stakeholders can avoid duplication of services as well as exploring how they can increase their levels of sharing and interaction across the border while ensuring their housing plans have a good relations outcome.

APPENDIX 2

Profile: Ithaca, New York

Since the late 1990s and early 2000s there has been a marked shift in immigration patterns across the United States. Whilst migrants are still attracted to traditional gateway cities, there is a growing trend of settlement beyond these key locations, to new and more rural destinations with little history or identity with immigration. Ithaca, a small city in Tompkins County in central Upstate New York, is one such area that has experienced an increase in undocumented Latino/Hispanic migrants. As illustrated in the map below, Tompkins County has experienced a 22-33 percent increase in the Hispanic population from 1990 to 2009. Increases are evident across the majority of Upstate New York counties, with some areas witnessing a 62 percent change.

Percentage Change in Hispanic Population in Upstate New York Counties 1990-2009



(Source: Centre for Disease Control, Race and Ethnicity Dataset)

These patterns are primarily a result of economic restructuring. Changes in the agri-food industry have meant that Mexican migrants now account for 95 per cent of the workforce on New York's fruit, vegetable and dairy farms (Goldweber, 2005). Whilst migrants are

helping to fill critical gaps in labour markets, in some New York counties they are also replacing a decline in the overall population. Although migrants are able to find employment relatively easy, they face many challenges when accessing housing, healthcare and education, resulting in limited social and economic mobility. These issues are compounded by migrants' undocumented status, but also due to the nature of new, rural destinations with little experience, infrastructure or capacity to deal with new immigration patterns and processes.

The fieldwork in Ithaca and the surrounding area comprised interviews with stakeholders from various organisations, migrant programmes, voluntary groups and academics from Cornell University. Although the nature of migration (legal versus undocumented) between Northern Ireland and Upstate New York differs substantially, there were many similar issues that could be examined through the lens of new destinations. The purpose of the fieldwork was to examine if and how migration processes being played out in new destinations, can help reshape dominant understandings of 'integration'. The fieldwork also contributed several practice based suggestions that could be applied to Northern Ireland, in relation to language training and assisting migrants' employment mobility.

APPENDIX 3

Queen's University Belfast

School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering
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David Keir Building
Stranmillis Road
Belfast BT9 5AG

Interview schedule

Profile and background:

- Name:
- Age:
- Nationality/Country of origin:
- When did you move to Northern Ireland / How long have you been living here?
- Where did you move from?
- Have you lived in other countries aside from your home country?
- What were your main reasons for moving to Northern Ireland?
- How much knowledge of Northern Ireland did you have before you arrived?
- What were your expectations in moving here? What do you hope to achieve?

Access to services, information and advice:

1. When you arrived in Northern Ireland did you need help in finding information and support to settle in?
    - What did you need help with? Probe: job, housing, healthcare, education, finance
    - What information did you need access to? Probe: availability and method
    - Who did you ask?
    - In your experience was this help enough?
    - Was there anything that you needed more help with? Was there a lack of help?

2. Have you ever contacted any other organisations or community groups for advice or help whilst living here?
    - If so, who did you contact and what for?
    - What did you need help with?
    - What was your experience?
    - How often would you use these organisations/groups?

3. Do you still use these organisations or have things got easier since you have been living here?
    - If you did need any help or advice in the future can you tell me who you would ask or where you would go?

Language:

1. Were you able to speak English before you arrived?
    - If so, can you speak/write fluently? Have you completed exams i.e. ESOL
    - If not, would you like to learn? Have you been able to access English classes?
    - Are you aware of / think there are sufficient opportunities to learn English?

2. How important is speaking English in your daily life?
3. Are there times when it is difficult to communicate? Probe: can you give me an example, how did you manage this?
4. Do you still use your first language: when and how often? Which do you prefer?

Housing:

1. Where do you currently live?
    - How long have you been living here?
    - Why did you decide to locate in .....? Probe: friends, family, hearsay, employment
    - Do you like living here? Probe: why, likes, dislikes
    - Have you lived anywhere else in Northern Ireland? Where and how long for? Type of housing?

2. What type of housing do you currently live in: social, private rented or privately owned?
    - How did you go about finding housing? Probe for experiences
    - Did you have much choice in deciding your type of housing?

3. Can you tell me about your living conditions?
    - Who and how many people do you live with?
    - How many rooms and bedrooms do you have?
    - What condition / quality is the house? Are there any problems?
    - What about your landlord (if rented)?
    - Are you happy living here?

4. If rented, would you like to own your house / do you think you will be able to achieve this?
5. Would you prefer to live anywhere else or are you happy living here? Probe: where and why

Community:

1. How would you describe the area/community in which you live?
    - Do you feel welcome in this community?
    - Does it feel like your home? Why or why not?
    - Do you know your neighbours? Who are your neighbours (i.e. fellow migrants or not)? How would you describe your relationships with them?

2. Have you ever experienced any problems in the area you live in? Can you tell me about these?

3. Have you ever felt excluded or unwelcome from any places within your neighbourhood / community?

4. What places in your community do you use to meet with people or spend your free time?
    - Are you involved in any activities such as sports, a church, or community group?
    - Who do you spend your free time with?

Identity:

1. What type of identity do you have? Prompts:
    - Is your identity important to you? Do you think your identity is recognised here in NI?
    - Do you think there is a common identity among i.e. Polish people here in NI?

2. How do you think other people perceive/identify you? Why do you think that? (Identity as a migrant?)
    - How would you like people to perceive you? / Do you think other people see you as an equal citizen?

3. Are there times when you feel you have been treated unfairly, with disrespect, or faced discrimination because of your identity? Can you tell me about these?

4. Do you feel you can express your opinions here? Who do you share your views with?

5. Do you feel part of society in Northern Ireland? Probe for examples/reasons.
    - What part of society do you feel you belong to?

6. Are you aware of the different communities in Northern Ireland and how they are divided and segregated?
    - Did you know about this before you arrived?
    - What do you understand about it?
    - Does this have any influence on your life here?

Social networks and relations:

1. Do you have family and friends living here?
    - Who? When did they arrive?
    - What friendship networks do you have? i.e. mainly Polish

2. How would you describe your relationships with fellow (Polish) people / other migrants?
    - Is there a sense of community amongst i.e. the migrant community?
    - Do you know Polish people living in other areas of NI?

- How did you establish these connections? Before you arrived, upon arrival, by meeting others?

3. Have you had opportunities to integrate/form relations with the existing population?
   - Who and in what ways?
   - What relationships do you have?
   - Is this important for you?
   - Are there certain communities/people that you can relate to more?

4. How important are these social connections? Probe: connections for finding employment, housing, accessing help and advice, for community life. How have they helped you to settle in?

5. Do you have young children living here with you?
   - How have they settled in to living here? Attending school, making friends, use of language, retaining culture?

Employment and education:

1. What jobs have you had whilst living here?
   - How did you find employment?
   - Do you like the job you are employed in?
   - How many hours do you work per week?
   - Would you prefer to work anywhere else?

2. Do you have any specific qualifications?
   - If yes, have you been able to use these qualifications in Northern Ireland?
   - If no, do you plan on completing any further education in Northern Ireland?

3. Is your job the type of job you are qualified to do?
   - Would you like to be able to improve your job prospects?
   - Do you feel there are opportunities for you to do this?
   - Is there anything which is preventing you from doing this?

4. Have you tried applying for jobs that offer more money or are higher skilled? (If no, why not; if yes, can you tell me about this?)

Transnational lives:

1. Do you stay in contact with your home country?
   - Who do you keep in contact with?
   - How do you keep in contact? Probe: travel, phone, internet.
   - How often?
   - Is it easy or difficult to keep in contact?
   - How important is this for you?
   - What are your main reasons for keeping (or not keeping) in contact? Probe: (family, friendship, support, remittances)

2. Will you continue living in Northern Ireland or return home? Probe: what would you prefer?

3. Do you see more opportunities here or in your home country? Why? Lack of opportunities anywhere?

4. Where would you call home: Northern Ireland or … (home country)? Why is that?

5. Has moving to Northern Ireland met your expectations? Why or why not? (Try to relate this answer back to the first question about expectations)

- Is there anything else you would like to tell me which you think is important?
- Is there anyone else who you know who might like to take part?

APPENDIX 4

Queen's University Belfast

School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering
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Information Sheet for Project Participants

Project Title: Migrant integration in 'new destination areas': a study of Northern Ireland
Project Sponsors: Queen's University Belfast and the Northern Ireland Rural Development Council
Project Researcher: Aisling Murphy

This information sheet has been written to inform you of a research project that is being carried out at Queen's University Belfast. It will tell you about the project so that you can decide whether you would like to take part. The project researcher, Aisling Murphy, will also explain fully what the project involves. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask.

What is the purpose of the study?
The study is looking at migrant experiences of life in Northern Ireland. Areas of Northern Ireland may be considered as 'new destination areas'; areas that have little history and experience in dealing with the processes of immigration. Immigration presents many challenges for both migrants' adjusting to life in a new society and for the society into which they are integrating. This study aims to examine this process by addressing the following aims:

1. The experiences of migrants adjusting to life in Northern Ireland
2. The role of integration stakeholders including government agencies, community groups and voluntary organisations

Why have I been chosen to take part?
You have been chosen to take part as you are a key actor in the integration of migrant communities. The project will be interviewing both individual migrants and key stakeholders from government agencies, community and voluntary organisations. The integration process cannot be examined thoroughly without the perspectives and input of all those involved.

Do I have to give consent to take part?
Yes. You have been provided with this information sheet and a consent form for you to consider your participation. To take part you will need to complete the form. However, if you do not want to provide your signature you can agree verbally to participate.

What will I be asked to do?
1. If you are a migrant person you will be asked questions on your life experiences since you arrived in Northern Ireland. This will include issues such as; your decision to locate in a particular area of Northern Ireland; experiences in accessing key services such as housing; opportunities to further your education and career; use of migrant support organisations; relations with your home country and your visions for the future.
2. As a statutory, community or voluntary group you will be asked questions on your role and responsibilities as a key stakeholder involved in this process. Questions will focus on the services you provide, how you connect and engage with the migrant community and the challenges or limits you face as an organisation involved in migrant integration.

What are the possible disadvantages to my taking part?
There are no disadvantages in taking part. Participation is entirely voluntary. You can decide not to answer any questions and you can withdraw from the study at any time without any reason or penalty.

What are the possible benefits?
By taking part you will be contributing to an important piece of research which is examining the integration of migrants in Northern Ireland.

Will my participation be kept confidential?
The information that you provide will only be accessible to the project researcher. All information will be stored securely and destroyed when no longer needed. You will have the option to remain anonymous so that your identity is not revealed or, if you wish, you do not have to remain anonymous. The researcher will accommodate your preference.

What will happen to the results of the study?
The results of the study will be used primarily for the attainment of a doctoral degree by the project researcher. The results may also be published in relevant journal articles, presented at conferences and used for future research purposes.

Who has reviewed the study?
The study has been reviewed and granted ethical approval by Queen's University Belfast.

What if there is a problem?
If you are unhappy about any aspect of your participation in the research you can raise these issues in confidence with Aisling Murphy, the project researcher. Also provided are the contact details of the research supervisor.

Project Researcher

Aisling Murphy
School of Planning, Architecture & Civil Engineering
Queen's University Belfast
David Keir Building
Stranmillis Road
Belfast BT9 5AG

Telephone: 028 9062 2763
Mobile: 07936392824
Email: amurphy26@qub.ac.uk

Project Supervisor

Dr Ruth McAreavey
School of Planning, Architecture & Civil Engineering
Queen's University Belfast
David Keir Building
Stranmillis Road
Belfast BT9 5AG

Telephone: 028 9097 5563
Email: r.mcareavey@qub.ac.uk

If these issues cannot be resolved and you wish to speak to someone else please contact:

Professor David Cleland (Head of School)
School of Planning, Architecture & Civil Engineering
Queen's University Belfast
David Keir Building
Stranmillis Road
Belfast BT9 5AG
Tel: 028 9097 5474
Email:d.cleland@qub.ac.uk

Thank you for taking the time to read this information leaflet

APPENDIX 5

Queen's University Belfast

School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering
Queen's University Belfast
David Keir Building
Stranmillis Road
Belfast BT9 5AG

Consent Form for Project Participants

Project Title: Migrant integration in 'new destination areas': a study of Northern Ireland
Project Sponsors: Queen's University Belfast and the Northern Ireland Rural Development Council
Project Researcher: Aisling Murphy

Please place a tick ☑ in the boxes below to indicate your consent. If you do not want to provide your name and signature the project researcher will explain the form to you and will accept your verbal consent.

1. I confirm that I have read the project information sheet and the researcher has explained fully what the project involves ☐
2. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions and have them answered satisfactorily ☐
3. I have been given time to consider my participation and agree to take part in the project ☐

By agreeing to take part I am willing to:

4. Be interviewed by the researcher ☐
5. Allow the interview to be audiotaped ☐
6. If necessary, I will be available for a second interview ☐
   (You can still participate even if you only want to be interviewed once)

Data Protection

7. I understand that the data collected will only be accessed by the project researcher and will not be shared with anyone else ☐
8. I would like to remain anonymous so that my identity will not be revealed **Yes** ☐
   No ☐
9. I allow the data to be used for research purposes and for future publications ☐

Withdrawal from the study

10. I understand that my participation is voluntary, I can choose not to take part in all or part of the interview and that I have the right to withdraw at any time without penalty ☐

Participant

Name: .....
Signature: .....
Date: .....

Project researcher

Name: .....
Signature: .....
Date: .....

Please keep a copy of this form for yourself and return the other copy to Aisling Murphy.
Thank you for your participation in this research project.

APPENDIX 6

Examples to Illustrate Participant Anonymity

Example A

Participant A requested anonymity. Their profile in the research revealed both their nationality and employment status as owning a local business in CSA. The combination of these attributes, with Person A's nationality being less common and the possibility of connecting this person with their business, potentially makes this participant identifiable. This example demonstrated the need to conceal case study locations.

Example B

Participant B did not request anonymity, but made it explicit that they only wanted their name to be used in the research. When compiling a profile of migrant participants in each case study area, which included attributes such as age, nationality and current employment, it was realised that the identity of this person could be revealed through their employment connection. The preferences of the participant were maintained, reaffirming the need to conceal case study areas.

Example C

Issues of anonymity were also raised with regards to participants from the statutory sector. Participant C is an employee within local government. They requested both their personal identity and their position within a local council to be concealed, requesting to be referred to as a 'local government representative'. With Participant C the only person responsible for certain duties within a particular Council Department, revealing the case study location would have compromised this negotiation of anonymity.

APPENDIX 7

Queen's University Belfast

School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering
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Belfast BT9 5AG

Interpreter Confidentiality Agreement

Project Title: Migrant integration in 'new destination areas': a study of Northern Ireland
Project Sponsors: Queen's University Belfast and the Northern Ireland Rural Development Council
Project Researcher: Aisling Murphy

Between

Name of interpreter (please print)

---

and

Queen's University Belfast
University Road
Belfast BT7 1NN

(Hereafter referred to as QUB)

1. The interpreter agrees not to use any information disclosed during the course of interviews, focus groups and discussions associated with the above project for any purpose, other than for the purpose of the above project, without obtaining the written agreement of QUB.

2. QUB will ensure that proper measures are taken to maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality to ensure the privacy of participants. This will include the anonymisation techniques such as the use of pseudonyms and the removal of identifiers.

Interpreter

Name: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

QUB

Name: .....

Signature: .....

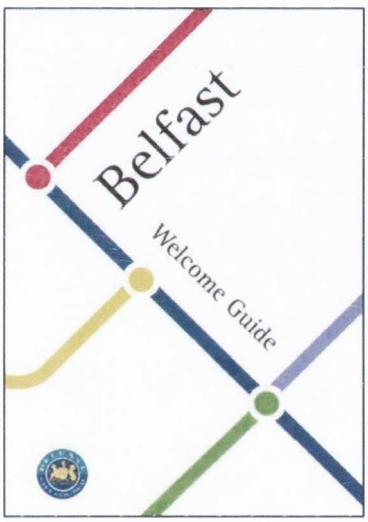
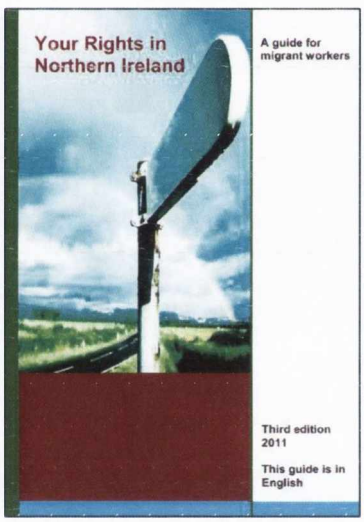
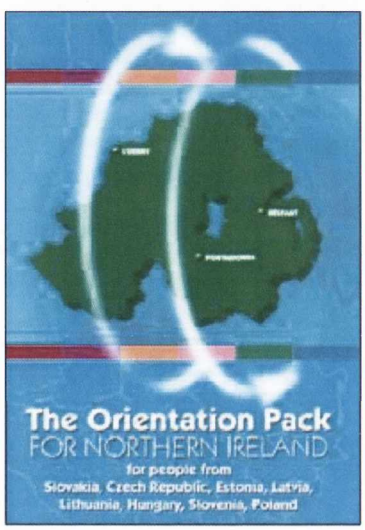
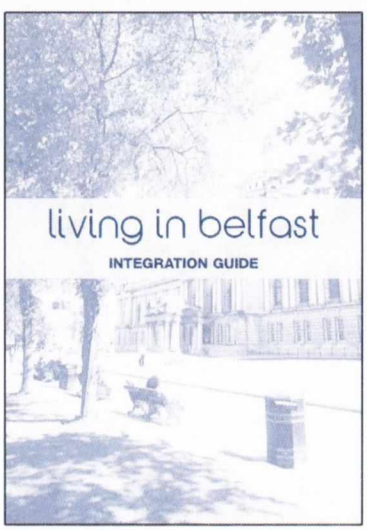
Date: .....

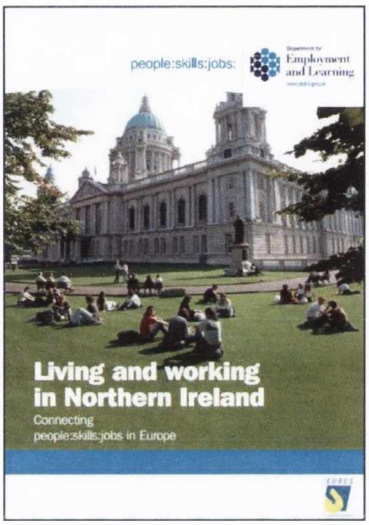
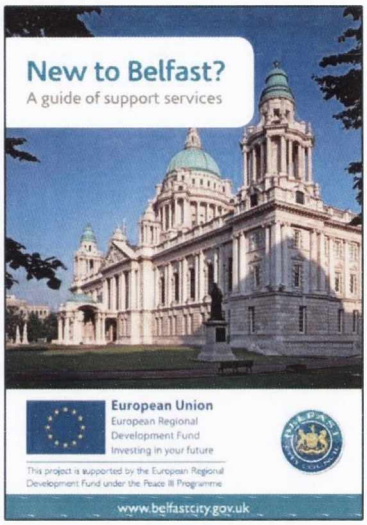
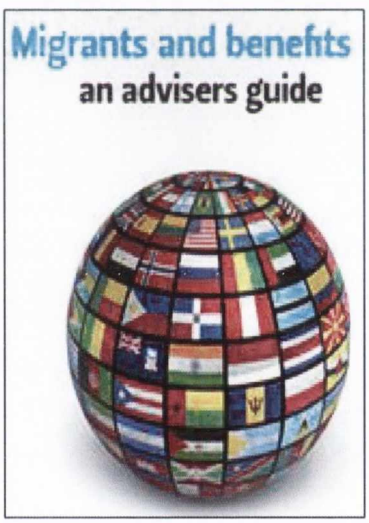
Please keep a copy of this form for yourself and return the other copy to Aisling Murphy.
Thank you for your participation in this research project.

APPENDIX 8

Help and Support Materials for Migrants

Several help and support documents for migrants living in Northern Ireland have been produced. These are generic documents that provide information and advice on subjects such as employment, housing, education, healthcare and language. Whilst some publications appear specific to Belfast, they include relevant information for migrants regardless of their location in Northern Ireland. Key documents are displayed below.

Belfast Welcome Guide (Belfast City Council Migrant Project) Published: 2006	Your Rights in Northern Ireland (Law Centre NI and NI Human Rights Commission) Published: 2006, Revised 2011
	
The Orientation Pack for Northern Ireland (Bryson Intercultural) Published: 2006-2007	Living in Belfast: Integration Guide (GEMS Northern Ireland) Published: 2010, Revised 2012
	

Living and Working in Northern Ireland (Department for Employment and Learning) Published: 2010	New to Belfast? A guide of support services (Belfast City Council Migrant Project) Published: 2011
	
Community Welcome Pack (Northern Ireland Housing Executive) Published: 2013	Migrants and Benefits: An advisors guide (Law Centre Northern Ireland for Belfast Integration and Participation Project) Published: 2014
	

Additional literature in the form of leaflets and posters are also distributed at a more local level within migrant advocacy organisations. To ensure the anonymity of case study locations these have not been included.

APPENDIX 9

Principal Component Analysis: Characteristics of component groups

Characteristics of component groups

Variable	Component*				
	1	2	3	4	5
Age					
18-24	8.7	6.3	9.2	9.1	4.0
25-34	11.0	13.5	17.3	27.3	16.0
35-44	26.0	19.8	20.4	12.1	17.6
45-54	17.3	13.5	12.2	21.2	25.6
55-64	26.0	16.7	20.4	15.2	12.8
65+	11.0	30.2	20.4	15.2	24.0
Lived outside NI					
Yes	14.0	25.0	26.5	30.3	22.4
Housing					
Owner	51.1	65.3	62.9	51.5	63.7
Social and private rental	44.5	34.7	35.1	48.5	36.3
Education					
No qualifications	25.8	20.0	16.5	9.1	21.0
Degree educated	7.8	11.6	12.4	36.4	21.0
Employment					
Higher professional	1.6	6.2	3.1	6.1	5.6
Lower managerial	6.2	8.3	12.2	9.1	20.8
Intermediate	12.4	8.3	16.3	36.4	16.8
Small employer	14.0	14.6	4.1	9.1	6.4
Lower supervisory / technical	6.2	8.3	12.2	9.1	10.4
Semi-routine	20.9	17.7	16.3	18.2	20.0
Routine	20.9	13.5	12.2	3.0	8.8
Never worked	4.7	7.3	13.3	0	4.8
Not classified	11.6	4.2	7.1	9.1	5.6

**Figures in percentages*